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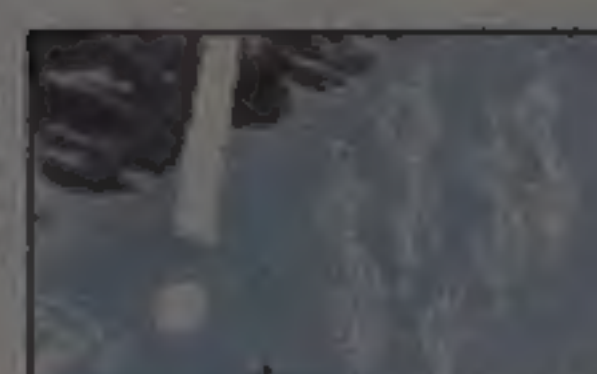
When it comes to music, there's a whole lot to look at.

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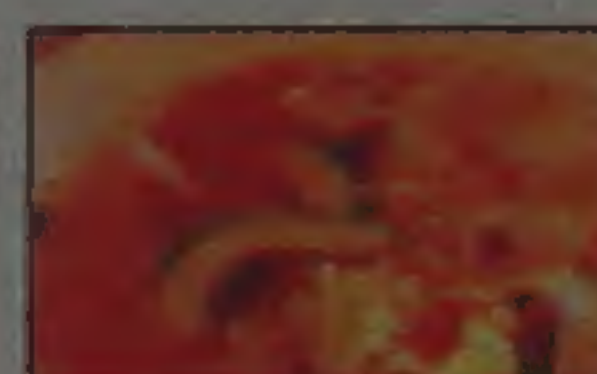
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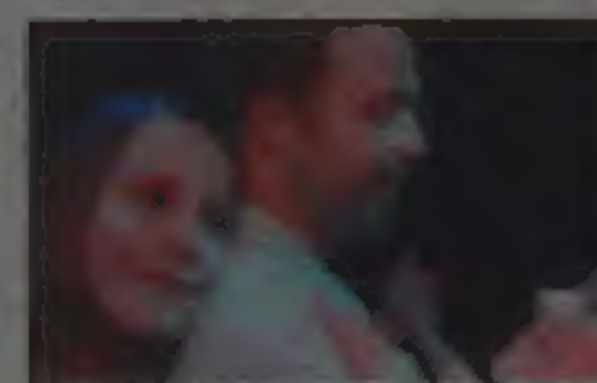
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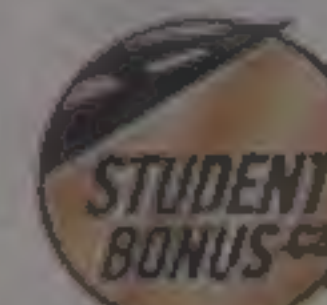
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Laws should include 'farms'

SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vueweekly.com

If ever there was a case which illustrates that the province's labour laws are not keeping pace with the realities of work in present-day Alberta, a court's decision to drop charges in the death of Yvon Daniel Poulin is certainly it.

Poulin died in 2004 on an agricultural jobsite near Peace River working for Northern Forage, which compacts hay bales for export, after he fell headfirst into a bailing machine. Inspectors at the time discovered that the company had failed to ensure an alarm system was installed to warn workers when the machine was in operation, and Northern Forage was subsequently charged with failing to ensure the health and safety of a worker.

But last week the case was dismissed because the judge ruled that Northern Forage is a farming operation, and is therefore exempt from the province's *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and accompanying regulations, which mandates such protections. Farm workers in the province are also excluded from coverage under most provisions of the *Employment Standards Code*, the *Labour Relations Code* and mandatory coverage under workers' compensation coverage.

Under questioning in the legislature on December 1, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development George Groeneveld once again defended the exemption, saying, "... farms are unique. Farms are where working families live and they play and they work." It's a quaint notion that simply bears no relation to the reality on the ground, where large agribusiness operations now dominate the agricultural sector, which is one of the deadliest sectors for workers in the province.

According to the non-profit Alberta Farm Safety Centre, agriculture has the highest rate of disabling injuries of all industries, and farm workers are five times more likely to be killed than workers in other occupations. Last year 12 farm workers were killed in the province—a good year given the average of 19 deaths a year since 1997—and just under 1000 were injured. By comparison, in all other occupations combined, the Workers' Compensation Board accepted a total of 154 workplace deaths in 2007.

Times have changed in rural Alberta, and it's time for the laws in the province to catch up. The province can, where appropriate, make some exceptions for small family farms, but for large-scale industrial agriculture it's time that all workers in the province, regardless of their occupation, receive the same protections at work. ▽



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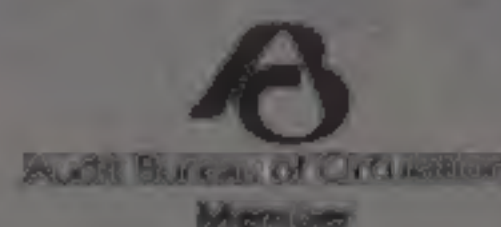
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MAIL LETTERS

PRESCIENT LETTER FROM NOVEMBER 26

Ricardo Acuña is as right on as ever in his latest op-ed ("Time to dump the sound bite," Nov 20 - Nov 26, 2008) with the exception of one paragraph.

The offending part comes when he states "... a person can identify as being concerned about environment, while politically supporting a party that intends to do nothing about it." The same paragraph continues in the same vein, berating the public for suffering from cognitive dissonance by accusing us of thinking one way and voting another.

Provincially, the unwashed can perhaps be accused of doing this because the Conservatives did get a bare majority of the popular vote (about 52 per cent). However, that was because a large number of people stayed home, recognizing, quite rightly, that their vote didn't matter. To add insult to injury that bare majority of votes translated into a massive majority in the legislature.

In the case of the federal election, it was another story altogether. The Harper Conservatives didn't even get a majority of votes and still ended up as the government. All the major parties, with the notable exception of the Greens, received fewer votes than they got in 2006, which

had the lowest turnout in history.

Clearly something is wrong with the way we elect politicians, but what is that something? Canada, Britain and the US have voting systems that almost always guarantee a lack of representation for the largest number of people and the recent federal election clearly showed that. However, awareness is growing rapidly and the term "proportional representation" is now something almost everyone understands and recognizes as something we should have.

The dominoes should begin to fall next spring when BC is to vote again on a system of PR called "Single Transferrable Vote" (STV), as they did during the last election. The last referendum failed by only two per cent, and people were poorly educated on the issue. This time British Columbians know that when governments they have not chosen keep being elected the system fails them and needs changing, and two per cent is a very small hurdle to jump.

One optimistic possibility is this: our Constitution allows the opposition parties to form a government in the event of a minority government failing. The Bloc, NDP and Liberals could potentially vote out the Conservatives in a motion of confidence and the Governor General could then refuse the dissolution of Parliament and give the others the option to try and form government. These three parties could put their animosity aside just long enough to revolutionize our electoral system, and turf out the Tories forever.

So, back to the main point of Acuña's

article: yes, people want to vote for the environment, and actually do, but the system fails them. It is also very true that "sound bite" communication dumbs us all down, and perhaps that is why traditional media is suffering while the Internet thrives. Of course there's a lot of electronic crap out there but at least one has more diversity of choice and can use one's intellect to sort through the garbage and actually choose what to believe.

DAVID PARKER

THANKS FOR DIGGING DEEP

Hey *Vue* (and especially Eden Munro). Rarely does a reviewer capture the essence of a record like you have on your review of our *American Lo-Fi*.

This record has had many good reviews—as did our first, *Dust Bowl Revival*, but many review only the face value. Over the course of our two records, and in the tracking for our upcoming third release, I have the tendency to bury the meaning of things under the surface, and Eden dug, and gets it. My thanks for that.

MARK BROWNING

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Millions of birds at risk from tar sands: report

Boreal forest disruption, fragmentation may mean loss of up to 166 million birds

SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vancouverweekly.com

Millions of birds that depend on the Boreal forest could be lost over the next half-century due to planned tar sands development in northern Alberta, according to a new report.

"The Boreal forest tar sands area is incredibly important for birds as a breeding habitat and as a globally important flyway for a great abundance and diversity of wetland-dependent birds," reads the report. "Unfortunately the rapidly expanding industrial tar sands oil extraction operations increasingly put these birds at risk."

The report, entitled *Danger in the Nursery*, estimates that between six million and 166 million birds could be lost over the next 30 to 50 years due to a combination of surface mining, landings on toxic tailings ponds and habitat destruction and fragmentation from infrastructure related to in-situ operations.

"Based on our estimates that could mean 10 to 50 per cent of the forest-dependent birds of the Boreal forest of Alberta could be lost, which is a pretty astounding number," says Jeff Wells, the report's lead author and a senior scientist with the US-based Boreal Songbird Initiative, which produced the report along with the Pembina Institute and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

The projected impacts are based on the habitat densities of breeding birds in the Boreal—estimated by the Canadian Wildlife Service at between 0.64 and 4.86 per acre—over the roughly 14 million hectares that could be developed for tar sands operations.

Surface strip-mining projects, which are projected to impact as much as 300 000 hectares over the next 30 to 50 years, will result in the loss of habitat for between 480 000 and 3.6 million adult birds.

"In addition, this loss of breeding habitat represents a loss of opportunity for continued production of young birds by future breeding adults," reads the report, meaning an additional loss of up to 36 million young birds over a 20-year period and up to 72 million over a 40-year timeframe.

Pointing out that losses resulting from incidents like the 500 ducks which died after landing on a Syncrude tailings pond in May are likely underesti-

NEWS | ENVIRONMENT

mated by industry reports, Wells says an additional 8000 to 100 000 birds annually could be dying from "oiling events" related to existing tailings ponds, and a doubling in the number of ponds due to increased mining activity could bring that number to between 17 000 and 300 000 annually.

The most significant impact on bird populations, however, will come from future development of in-situ projects, which will use steam injection to recover the 80 per cent of proven reserves that are too deep for recovery through surface mining.

Despite having a smaller footprint than mining operations, in-situ operations require a network of roads, well pads and compressor stations. Current leases for in-situ operations will remove 485 000 hectares of Boreal, resulting in a loss of between 777 000 and 5.8 million birds. That number could increase to as high as 14.5 million if leases are extended to the entire tar sands region.

"The in-situ especially is the hidden cost to wildlife because it occurs over such a vast area, or is projected to eventually," explains Wells. "What it also does is cause the habitat to be split up into small islands of forest and wetlands. The ways this fragmentation affects wildlife are many, but they include things like changes in hydrology and microclimate, which affects actually the habitat and the species that can occur there—plant and animal. It changes the predator populations. And then more recently we've discovered that fragmentation actually disrupts the social structure of bird populations. So there's a whole host of ways that fragmentation can cause reductions in bird densities."

Such fragmentation, the report says, could result in the loss of up to 76 million birds over a 30 to 50 year period.

"Taken together these estimates could mean that as many as 166 million birds may be lost if tar sands development continues without some kind of major change," says Wells. "Amazingly, these numbers do not even include the effects of airborne and waterborne pollutants, toxins, impacts from water withdrawal, external infrastructure development includ-



Supplied, Jeff Wilder

ing pipelines, and from global warming. We still don't even have enough information to estimate the total losses from those."

BRAD BELLOWES, a spokesperson with Suncor, which currently has both surface mining and in-situ operations in northern Alberta, acknowledges that some impacts on wildlife are unavoidable, but he questions the scale of the predictions contained in the report.

"I do find in the report that the data seems to assume unconstrained and somewhat implausible scenarios," Bellows says. "It seems to assume that all potential mining projects will go ahead nearly simultaneously, absent any parallel reclamation process, any technology improvement. So it seems like the authors were striving for such a worst-case scenario that it actually beggars belief."

Bellows says that as part of the regulatory process for approvals in the tar sands, companies are required to report any wildlife mortality to the province, and the numbers that Suncor has tracked are nothing like the estimates in the report. He offers as an example Suncor's reports to regulators on bird deaths from landings on tailings ponds: "We would typically have an average between 2001 and

2007 of about eight birds per year. And that's where I'm interested in the source of some of the projections in this report. There's some very large numbers which seem implausible."

While he disputes the report's estimates, Bellows says that Suncor is trying to minimize its impact on bird and other animal populations.

"For the general mined areas really the long-term mitigation is reclamation. As an example, we have an area called Crane Lake that was an area that was disturbed and has been reclaimed to a wetland and in that area we've had documented over 129 bird species, with 43 species taking up residency in the lake area."

He does admit that Suncor needs to do a better job of reclaiming the 95 000 hectares the company has disturbed to date.

"Total land reclaimed from land we've disturbed is now about 10 per cent of total disturbance, but we're obviously looking to accelerate the pace of reclamation," he says.

Bellows adds that for its in-situ operations Suncor tries to mitigate the impact on birds and other wildlife through approaches such as narrow cutlines which are meandered to reduce sight lines for predators and returning removed material to cut-

lines as mulch to speed reclamation.

Despite challenging the numbers, Bellows says he agrees with a number of the recommendations in the report.

"I think if you strip away some of the hyperbole in the summary report, the recommendations that are in there are things that are moving along: looking at the need for a broadly coordinated approach to land-use planning, for example, that's something that's expected next year to the government of Alberta's land-use framework. So I think that there's directionally a lot of things that we would agree with."

Other recommendations aimed at government include fully implementing national laws and international treaties aimed at protecting migratory birds, and strengthening and enforcing regulations around waste management, water withdrawals, pollution levels and habitat destruction and reclamation.

The report calls for a moratorium on new development until adequate conservation measures are in place and says that ultimately we need to move away from dependence on the tar sands through improvements in vehicle efficiency and limiting the production of high-carbon fuels, but Wells says it also points to plenty that industry can do in the meantime to minimize impacts on the Boreal.

"There's actually a list of different ways that different groups have come up with trying to make the process itself less harmful," Wells says. "It includes everything from thinking about ways to lower emissions to using dry tailings ponds instead of the current wet tailings to decreasing the size of corridors to trying to find real ways to reclaim habitat that's lost, which no one's figured out how to do right yet. So there are lots of ways to move forward but it's going to be a slow process."

"In the meantime we think the prudent approach to having meaningful change is to think about implementing a land-use plan that includes protecting 40 per cent of northeastern Alberta and that we should have interim protection for areas that have already been identified as important and to think about opportunities like mitigation, including off-site mitigation. So there's actually some things that could be done quickly and easily now." ▀

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NEWS ROUNDUP

VISION 2020 MYOPIC: OPPOSITION

Opposition parties have blasted Vision 2020, a report released December 1 by Alberta Minister of Health and Wellness Ron Liepert which lays out five broad goals for the future of the health-care system in Alberta.

The report includes recommendations to "enhance short stay, non-hospital facilities and other clinic-type arrangements," the development of more assisted living and housing support for seniors, improved access to services in rural areas and measures to address staff shortages and improve service delivery.

Liberal Leader Kevin Taft called the plan "a disaster in the making," saying, "delivering more services through short-stay non-hospital facilities ... is bureaucratic speak for a proliferation of investor-driven for-profit clinics."

NDP Leader Brian Mason said the report didn't offer any new ideas. "It's got all the right fluffy, feel-good catch phrases about restructuring the system to be more efficient for patients, but there's no substance."

RALLY! RALLY! RALLY! ... RALLY!

As the words "prorogue" and "confidence" replace "change" and "historic" as political terms du jour, supporters on both sides of the Conservative/Coalition divide are planning rallies in the city through the

weekend. Here's what's happening if you want to pick a team (or a fight).

Stop the Coalition Rally
Thursday, December 4 (1 pm)
NDP MP Linda Duncan's constituency office (10049 - 81 Ave)

Key quote: "Please come out and help us defend democracy!"

Coalition Yes! Let's Make Parliament Work
Thursday, December 4 (6 pm)
Sir Winston Churchill Square

Key quote: "It's time to give the other parties a chance to do what Harper can't—to put aside petty differences and work together to lead Canada through this economic crisis."

Rally for Canada
Saturday, December 6 (Noon - 2 pm)
MP Linda Duncan's constituency office (10049 - 81 Ave)

Key quote: "The government of Canada would be at the mercy of people committed to destroying our confederation."

An event is also planned in Edmonton to mark the national Climate Day of Action on Sunday, December 7 starting at noon. The march begins at the south end of Canada Place (9700 Jasper Ave) and makes its way to the legislature.

—SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vueweekly.com

PSE institutions should butt out

Anti-smoking group calls for policies to ban tobacco funding

SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vueweekly.com

A provincial anti-smoking advocacy group has given poor marks to Alberta's universities and colleges, saying none of them have adequate policies in place against financial involvement with tobacco companies.

Of the 22 publicly funded institutions in the province reviewed by Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) for their November 26 report card, only the University of Alberta received a failing grade, for accepting millions of dollars in tobacco industry funding for research, contracts and scholarships and investing some \$2 million in tobacco company stocks, according to ASH.

Calgary's Bow Valley College received the report card's highest mark, a "B," for its policy prohibiting donations of any kind from tobacco companies, while the University of Lethbridge received a "C" for having a policy against investing in tobacco stocks.

All other institutions received a mark of "D," explains ASH Executive Director Les Hagen, because while they may not have actually accepted money from or invested in tobacco companies, they lack clear policies against it.

"The only funding we are aware of at present is the funding that is accepted at the University of Alberta," Hagen says. "Our goal with this report card is to close the door and to ensure that the tobacco industry does not exploit any other post-secondary institutions in the province."

This isn't the first time the University of Alberta has come under fire for ties to the tobacco industry. As was reported by *Vue Weekly* in March of 2007, the U of A accepted a controversial \$1.5-million grant in 2005 from the US Smokeless Tobacco Company for research on cigarette alternatives conducted by Carl Phillips, who was then an assistant professor at the U of A's School of Public Health. Hagen says the university has also accepted money from Philip Morris and Imperial Tobacco.

While the faculty of medicine and dentistry, the faculty of nursing and the School of Public Health at the U of A have in recent years voted to ban such funding, the university continues to defend the money it receives from tobacco companies.



NEWS TOBACCO

Quinn Phillips, a public affairs associate with the University of Alberta, responded to an interview request by saying that the university would only respond to questions related to its tobacco policies with the following written statement from Carl Amrhein, the university's provost and vice-president (academic): "The university accepts research funding from many legal sources, and tobacco is a legal substance. The university's policies protect the rights of our professors to pursue any legal area of research if all of the many research guidelines are met. All research with human subjects, regardless of funding source, must get ethics board approval."

Hagen rejects the U of A's defence of tobacco funding.

"Tobacco has no place in higher learning. There is no such thing as no strings attached, especially when it comes to tobacco-industry funding," Hagen argues. "If there are any short-term benefits for an institution who takes this money they are far outweighed by the tremendous human impact of tobacco use on our society and I would say on the graduates, staff and students at the University of Alberta."

ALONG WITH THE release of the report card Hagen has sent letters to the presidents of each institution calling on them to immediately implement strict policies to refuse any form of grants or donations from tobacco companies, refuse to enter into any arrangement with anyone connected to the industry and to ensure their institution has no investments in tobacco stocks.

"Public education institutions that accept tobacco funding are compromising their credibility and integrity and they are contributing to the

commercialization of tobacco," reads the letter. "Tobacco companies have a long and dubious track record of exploiting academic institutions for their commercial gain and your institution is not immune from this influence."

David Beharry, a communications and external relations spokesperson with Grant MacEwan College, which received a "D" from ASH, says that while he isn't sure whether MacEwan has a policy in place, their view on tobacco funding is unambiguous.

"There may or may not be a formal policy, but I do know that we do not accept any funding from tobacco companies and we also don't sell tobacco products on our campuses," he says, adding that those policies date back to at least 1993.

Hagen stresses that most institutions in the province likely don't receive tobacco money, but he still believes having an outright ban on the books is important.

"Unless institutions have a policy, in our view, they are vulnerable to extracting tobacco industry funding," he says.

Hagen adds that his group hasn't ruled out asking the provincial government—which has implemented a series of strong anti-smoking measures in recent years, including a ban on the sale of tobacco on campuses starting January 1—to get involved if colleges and universities don't act.

"With this report card and this mailing we're giving the post-secondary institutions every opportunity to fix the problem themselves, but I would say we'll probably do another report card a year from now and if we're not seeing any kind of meaningful progress we'll take it to the minister of advanced education," Hagen says. "The Alberta government has taken action already on post-secondaries, and I'm sure they would take further action is further action is warranted." ▀

MacEwan

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Four harsh truths about climate change

COMMENT

DYER STRAIGHT

GWYNNE DYER
gwynne@vuwweekly.com

About two years ago, I realized that the military in various countries were starting to do climate change scenarios in-house—scenarios that started with the scientific predictions about rising temperatures, falling crop yields and other physical effects, and examined what that would do to politics and strategy.

The scenarios predicted failed states proliferating because governments couldn't feed their people, waves of climate refugees washing up against the borders of more fortunate countries, even wars between countries that shared the same rivers. So I started interviewing everybody I could get access to: not only senior military people but scientists, diplomats and politicians.

About 70 interviews, a dozen countries and 18 months later, I have reached four conclusions that I didn't even suspect when I began the process. The first is simply this: the scientists are really scared. Their observations over the past two or three years suggest that everything is happening a lot faster than their climate models predicted.

This creates a dilemma for them, because for the past decade they have been struggling against a well-funded campaign that cast doubt on the phenomenon of climate change. Now, finally, people and even governments are listening. Even in the United States, the world headquarters of climate change denial, 85 per cent of the population now sees climate change as a major issue, and both presidential candidates in last month's election promised 80 per cent cuts in American emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050.

The scientists are understandably reluctant at this point to announce publicly that their predictions were wrong; that it's really much worse and the targets will have to be revised. Most of them are waiting for overwhelming proof that climate change really is moving faster, even though they are already privately convinced that it is.

So governments, now awakened to the danger at last, are still working to the wrong emissions target. The real requirement, if we are to avoid runaway global warming, is probably 80 per cent cuts by 2030, and almost no burning whatever of fossil fuels (coal, gas and oil) by 2050.

The second conclusion is that the generals are right. Food is the key issue, and world food supply is already very tight: we have eaten up about two-thirds of the world grain reserve in the past five years, leaving only 50 days' worth in store. Even a one degree Celsius rise in average global temperature will take a major bite out of food production in almost all the countries that are closer to the equator than to the poles, and that includes almost all of

the planet's bread-baskets.

So the international grain market will wither for lack of supplies. Countries that can no longer feed their people will not be able to buy their way out of trouble by importing grain from elsewhere, even if they have the money. Starving refugees will flood across borders, whole nations will collapse into anarchy—and some countries may make a grab for their neighbours' land or water.

THESE ARE SCENARIOS that the Pentagon and other military planning staffs are examining now. They could start to come true as little as 15 or 20 years down the road. If this kind of breakdown becomes widespread, there will be little chance of making or keeping global agreements to curb greenhouse gas emissions and avoid further warming.

The third conclusion is that there is a point of no return after which warming becomes unstoppable—and we are probably going to sail right through it. It is the point at which anthropogenic (human-caused) warming triggers huge releases of carbon dioxide from warming oceans, or similar releases of both carbon dioxide and methane from melting permafrost, or both. Most climate scientists think that point lies not far beyond two degrees Celsius hotter.

Once that point is passed, the human race loses control: cutting our own emissions may not stop the warming. But we are almost certainly going to miss our deadline. We cannot get the 10 lost years back, and by the time a new global agreement to replace the Kyoto accord is negotiated and put into effect, there will probably not be enough time left to stop the warming short of the point where we must not go.

So—final conclusion—we will have to cheat. In the past two years, various scientists have suggested several "geo-engineering" techniques for holding the temperature down directly. We might put a kind of temporary chemical sunscreen in the stratosphere by seeding it with sulphur particles, for example, or we could artificially thicken low-lying maritime clouds to reflect more sunlight.

These are not permanent solutions; merely ways of winning more time to cut our emissions without triggering runaway warming in the meanwhile. But the situation is getting very grave, and we are probably going to see the first experiments with these techniques within five years.

There is a way through this crisis, but it isn't easy and there is no guarantee of success. As the Irishman said to the lost traveller: if that's where you want to go, sir, I wouldn't start from here.

Gwynne Dyer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries. His column appears each week in Vue Weekly.



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ISSUES

VIEW WEEKLY

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Brent Denley via CC

A wasted opportunity

No proof it's needed, little benefit from Stelmach's \$1.8 billion royalty holiday

RICARDO ACUÑA / uslberta.ca/parkland

It is truly amazing what some folks are able to justify these days simply by referencing the global financial crisis. Even Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach got in the

game last month. "The world has changed in recent months and we must respond," Stelmach said on November 19. "We must be competitive, so we're making this change to encourage new

activity in the oil patch."

The change he is referring to is this: six weeks before the new royalty framework announced by the government last year (you remember, the one that was supposed to provide consistency and predictability to industry and Albertans over the long term) comes into force, the government has already granted a 10 per cent holiday from it, and locked that holiday in for five years.

The government's rationale for the holiday, which will cost Albertans \$1.8 billion in revenue, was that it was needed to protect Alberta jobs, which were in danger as a result of the economic downturn. What the government didn't do, however, was actually provide proof of this dangerous downturn in the oil patch.

According to the forecast released at the end of October by the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors (CAODC), the projected average for drilling rigs in Alberta in 2009 will be 348. The average number of drilling rigs in Alberta in October 2007, when the new royalty framework was announced, was 318.

In other words, there will be more drilling activity on average next year than in the month the royalty framework was developed and that somehow justifies providing a royalty holiday. So what it looks like, according to the industry's own numbers, is that this "slow-down" actually just means fewer new jobs being created, not current jobs being lost.

Even the government's own budget forecast, released the day before the royalties announcement, predicts a year-end surplus for the province that is almost half a billion dollars higher than originally budgeted back in April. So where's the down-turn?

But for the sake of argument let's ignore the numbers and take Mr Stelmach's assertion of a looming slow-down in the oil patch at face value. When Mr Stelmach first became premier, and was asked repeatedly by Albertans to slow down the pace of development because our economy and infrastructure could not handle it, the premier famously replied that he would not "step on the brake" because the market would take care of it.

Now that he claims the market has taken care of it, however, he wants to step in and stop it from happening—take the market's foot of the brake-pedal, if you will, and slam his own back down on the accelerator. Our province needed some

room to breathe—a slow-down is not necessarily a bad thing. Maybe it will take the edge off of the labour shortage, inflation and the assault on the environment.

The other interesting factor here is that, for a party that claims to embrace the free market, they sure seem to have a hard time understanding how it operates. If oil and gas drilling is slowing down, perhaps it is because they are waiting for the price of oil to climb back up to where it was earlier this year. Why drill a hole when oil is around \$50 if you could wait a few months and get oil valued at over \$70?

AT BEST, what the premier's \$1.8 billion royalty holiday is achieving is the creation of jobs today that would have been created anyway six months to a year down the road. At worst, it's a giveaway to industry to encourage them to do what they were going to do anyway.

The most concerning thing about this royalty holiday, however, is what it says about this government's lack of foresight and vision.

By focusing the new reduced royalty on conventional oil and gas, the government is essentially trying to stimulate the economy by encouraging investment in natural resources that have already peaked in terms of supply and are in decline. And by trying to encourage drilling they are focusing their efforts on an activity that creates fewer long-term jobs than virtually any other in the energy sector. How is this an intelligent plan for economic stimulation?

Imagine, on the other hand, taking that same \$1.8 billion and using it to incentivize and stimulate a genuine Alberta renewable energy industry—one that would create green and sustainable jobs for the future, and reduce our province's dependence on oil and gas.

Alberta is one of the best places in the world for the creation of both wind and solar power. All that is currently missing is for the provincial government to stop subsidizing oil and gas and encourage these green developments—developments that, on average, result in more long-term jobs than does oil and gas. Wouldn't that be a much more strategic and beneficial way to stimulate the economy?

No matter how you look at it, the new royalty holiday makes no sense. It is difficult to fathom how Premier Stelmach can even try to justify it as anything other than a hand-out to his powerful friends in Alberta's oil and gas industry. In fact, Albertans should be offended that he is pretending that it is anything else.

The current global financial crisis has provided a critical opportunity for governments around the world to invest public resources in the creation of a new, more just and sustainable economy. The Alberta government, however, has clearly decided to ignore the opportunity and continue propping up the same old dirty and unsustainable economy. What a waste. ▽

Ricardo Acuña is executive director of the "Parkland Institute, a non-partisan public policy research institute housed at the University of Alberta.

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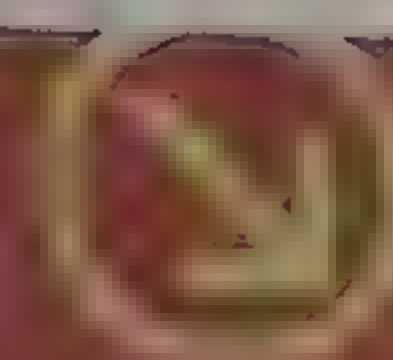
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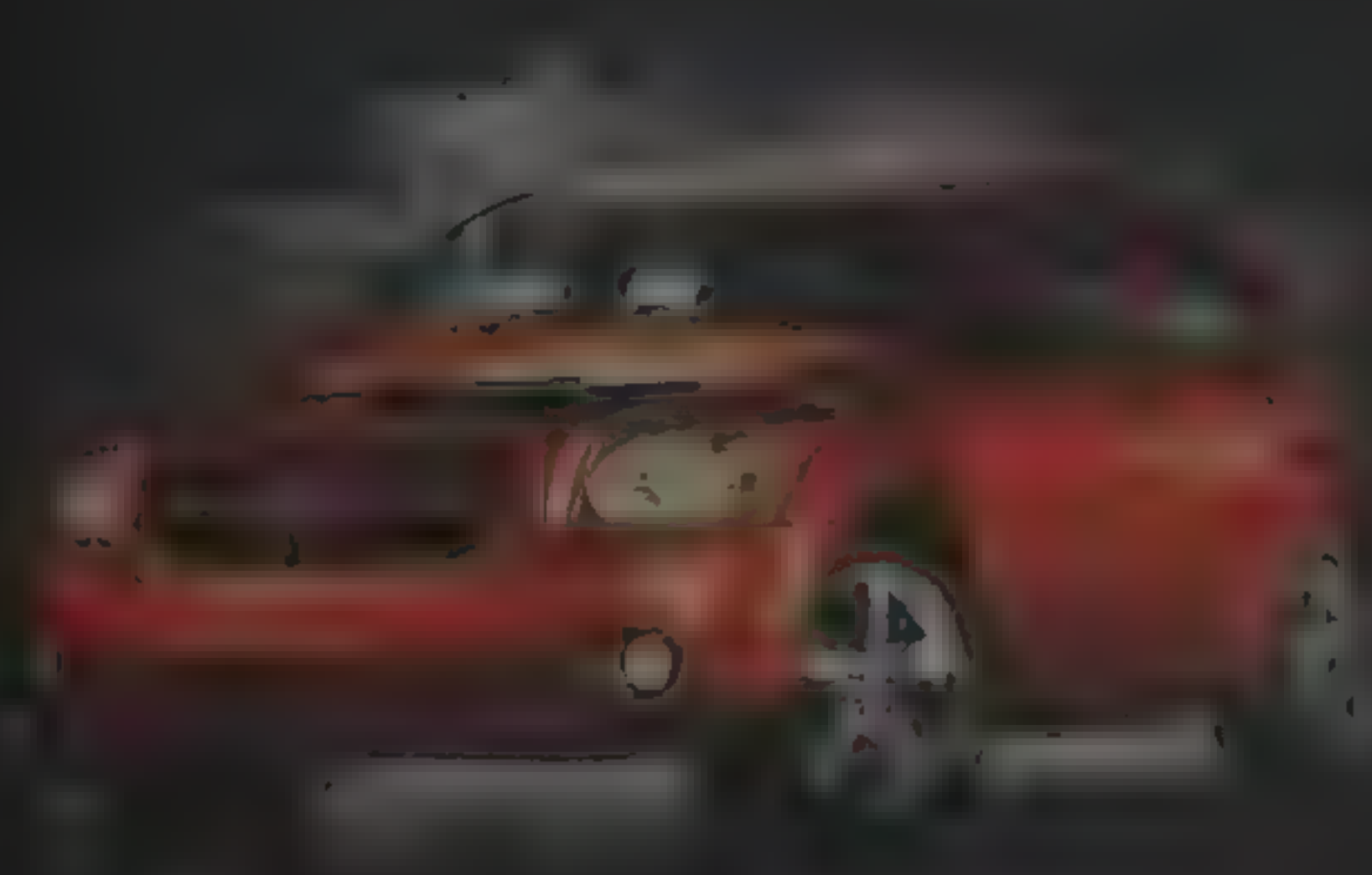
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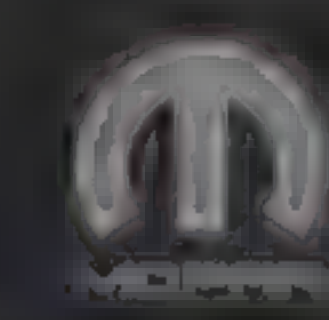


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Little fun reflected in the *Mirror*

GAMES INFINITE LIVES

Perhaps appropriately, given the title, playing *Mirror's Edge* is a strangely double-sided experience. On one hand, the game is (and is obviously trying very hard to be) something authentically new: a hyper-stylish first-person action game where shooting and fisticuffs are almost always the wrong thing to do, where the action is focused on maintaining relentless forward motion while fleeing through a vertiginous urban obstacle course. On the other, the game is constantly evoking a long heritage of other games and other genres ... and the comparison is not always favourable.

First, you see *Mirror's Edge* in the context of the first-person-shooter genre. Precision jumping has always been a bug-bear for first-person games, simply because players can't usually see their characters' feet, and the wide-angle camera necessary to the gun-combat genre distorts distances at close range. There's a kind of perversity, then, to the idea of making a first-person game that's all about successfully making prodigious leaps with hair's-breadth margins between success and the sidewalk; the first preoccupation, even before the disc is out of its shrink-wrap, is, "Can they make this work, and if so how?"



Well, developer DICE did make it work, technically. As to how, it just comes down to camera, controls and level design playing nice with each other. The camera is designed such that players have a much better sense of body position than is usual in first-person games; you're always catching glimpses of your hands and feet, firmly establishing your character as a physical reality as opposed to a disembodied point of view. The controls, actuated by all four fingers on the shoulder buttons, map consistently to specific body motions and intuitively chain together for epic leaps, slides, wall-runs, rolls

and the occasional bit of kung fu. The environments help out by making your way forward quite clear, with where you're leaping from and where you're leaping to usually conveniently labelled in bright red. Bottom line, DICE did everything possible to take the frustration out of first-person acrobatics.

BUT IS IT FUN? This is where more comparisons pop into the head, and I guess it depends on what you call fun. It might be partly to do with *Mirror's Edge*'s washed-clean aesthetic, bright-solid colour palette and cel-shaded cutscenes, but right from

the start I had my head full of another speed-centric urban-environment fugitive game, *Jet Grind Radio* (aka *Jet Set Radio*), from back in the Dreamcast days. Like *Mirror's Edge*, it offered a near-future fascist techno-state where underground dissidents stay alive only through their ability to make impossible time through the obstacle course of the city, milking every surface and structure for mobility and momentum. It was a riot of speed and colour and music and life ... and that was fun.

Mirror's Edge, in contrast, offers little in the way of joy. There's a real rush, yes, when you get your timing and instinct right and everything comes together into a pure experience of finding the line ... but those are fleeting moments, and they usually come after many cycles of fail and retry, fail and retry. And when the motion stops, either through your error or in designed dead-spots, you feel *Mirror's Edge* for what it is: a dead thing. An empty, soulless series of contrived playgrounds, desperately strung together by a bogus sci-fi concept and a series of inept tone-deaf cutscenes.

As the solution to a technical and design problem—proving that, sure, the intimate physicality of running and jumping (cornerstone activities of video games) can be fully expressed in a first-person game—*Mirror's Edge* succeeds, but that's as far as it goes. It can hold you for a long time, in the way any series of challenging tasks might hold you, but it's not what I call fun. ▀

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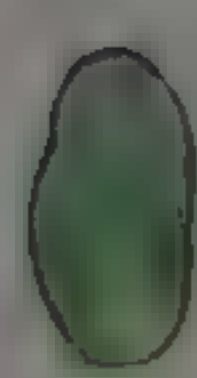
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Can't we all just get along?

HEALTH

WELL, WELL, WELL

CORRECTION
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We have, along with everything else that is ailing, an ailing health care system, and we have not-at-all-ailing CEOs serving on our health board, and a health minister scoffing at the criticism coming his way, and the former chair of the Capital Health Authority investigating the ethics of appointments to the health board that replaced his.

What we need on that board is, of course, a little more health savvy—people who know their way around medical journals, people who know their way around alternative health science journals, people who know something about

nutritional and biological and preventative medicine—so we can save our emergency rooms for grave maladies instead of the kind we can predict with absolute certainty will only continue to increase in volume.

We have epidemics of chronic degenerative disease and drug dependencies and STDs and cancer and heart disease and anxiety and insomnia and despair in young people already too disillusioned to commit to much of anything, and we're being told not to worry about health care or the banks or our jobs or our futures; we're being told, literally, just to go for a walk and listen to some music.

We have endless lineups to see doctors and specialists whose help frustrates us endlessly because after waiting forever there's not much of a

cure for what ails us. Last week we had AIDS day, and we have more awareness days and weeks and months than we can handle, and we're tired of hearing about epidemics and depressions because Christmas is coming and we just want to be happy and feel good and optimistic about the world. We want to know that it'll all be OK, and that 50 is the new 40 for all of us, not only for the rich and famous who can afford special private and alternative health care.

And I'm tired of the voices championing all things green out of one side of their mouths while remaining silent on the absolute contradiction between pharmaceutically based medicine and saving our Earth. Because drugs are anything but green—just ask those living near drug manufacturing factories like those

in India who are shouldering an enormous burden of ecological devastation.

ALL IT TAKES to know that natural medicines are beautiful for what ails most of us most of the time is a few conversations with ex-pharmacists old enough to remember their training in herbal medicine or pharmacists who, because they were tired of the chemical nightmares they were having, have quit the business and now dispense biological medicines.

I can already hear the usual arguments that surely we shouldn't be promoting treatments that don't work. Spare me. We all know it's infinitely more complex than either working or not working. Chemo therapy and anti-cholesterol drugs and psychiatric meds don't work well much of the time and too often cause untold harm.

We could—here's a novel thought—integrate the best of both kinds of medicine, or has working together become a complete dinosaur?

Why should those undergoing the

ravages of chemo or antivirals have to pay out-of-pocket for nutritional treatments that offset the side effects? Why should those who opt out of conventional treatments and who claim their cancer or arthritis or bipolar or death sentence has been in remission for a decade or two as a result of their holistic or natural approach be labeled as crazies promoting woo?

Thinking about this can make me want to cry, which new research has again confirmed to be good for us. And for those who have difficulty letting themselves cry, acupuncture—that voodoo needing no more than aptly placed needles to induce tears and relieve pain—offers a vast improvement over picking a fight or getting drunk to get those stress chemicals out of their systems. But though acupuncture and natural medicines do infinitely more than relieve stress, they are still not covered by health care insurance and are available mostly only to the wealthy and those willing to go into debt to access them. **v**

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"YES. COME."

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RIGHT, RIGHT.

SPACE.

WE'RE IN IT.

Odds on MacT

HOCKEY **IN THE BOX**
DAVE YOUNG AND TB PLAYER
inthebox@vancouverweekly.com

Here's last week's Oiler news in a flash. Lose at home (2-1) to the Kings. Win a Saturday matinee game (4-2) in St. Louis. Lose in Dallas (4-3). Call up the mythical Rob Schremp. Drop to within three standings points of last place overall in the league (as of last Tuesday night). Keep coach. For now.

MACT AND CHEESE Sometimes it must suck to be Craig MacTavish. People have been calling for his head since the day he took the job as the Oilers bench boss. They were quieted temporarily after the improbable '06 Cup run, but returned with a vengeance when the team fell short a year later. Personally, I've always been a bit of a quiet supporter, feeling that he did a fine job of teaching responsibility to the younger players, while getting value out of the veterans. And while I think that he is a good coach in these respects, I also feel that the current edition of the team may have different needs than what coach MacTavish has to offer.

As a player, MacT was the prototypical hard-nosed grinder. He wasn't blessed by amazing speed or finesse, but by a hard-work ethic and a deft understanding of the game. Not surprisingly, players who exhibit these same traits do well under him. But as the Oilers have acquired more talented players it has become more apparent he has no idea how to use players with skill. As a coach of a rebuilding team, MacTavish is a good fit. As a coach of a team trying to reach an elite level, he fits like a 10-year old suit; a little tight in places, and a bit out of style.

MacT is in his eighth year as head coach and he can really only keep it interesting for the players for so long. It may be time to shake things up with someone who's not afraid to get "smashy" in the dressing room to get his point across.

There are some fine "smashy-type" candidates out there as well. Pat Quinn and John "Fonzarelli" Tortorella come to mind. Do I feel that MacT has to go? Maybe. Do I think that he will anytime soon? Probably not. I give it 10-1 odds that he stays until New Years, and 3-1 that he lasts the entire season. **TB**

COACH'S CORONER TB said a lot so I'll give my shorter State of the Coach address. The blog-world's call to oust MacT has been loud but not incendiary; the growing "anti-MacT" contingent seems to speak with a tone of resignation (if that's the right term!) rather than hatred.

MacT's departure seems more like a "when" than an "if" issue right now. So, "when" MacT is replaced, the change should be made before the team is too far out of playoff range and something can be salvaged and gained from such an extreme move. December's schedule provides the team its best opportunity to improve its lot with eight home games out of 13 matches. If things don't look better for the Oilers by mid-or-late December, MacT is likely gone. Odds? I give a less optimistic 15-1 odds that he survives 2008 and only 20-1 odds that he will be behind the bench at season's end.

My gut also tells me that your next Oiler head coach will be former Oiler draft pick Marc Habscheid.

Hopefully assistant coaches Charlie Huddy, Billy Moores and Kelly Buchberger don't get together and announce to the Governor General (or Tambellini) their plan to form a coalition coaching position until this is sorted out. Bill Moores does somewhat resemble Jack Layton. **DY**

THIS WEEK'S OILER DEFINITION
"Sloppy Seconds": 1) An offensive, sexist term best left to the locker room and not meant for a media scrum. If you're Sean Avery, it gets you an indefinite suspension. 2) One thing not plaguing the Oilers as they have outscored opponents 29-25 thus far in the second frame. **v**



Mexico Lindo est lindo

KELSEY STROEDER / kelsey@vueweekly.com

'Parra mí, sopa de tortilla de primero, y para sequendo enchiladas o mole" would be the phrase to use in Spanish to order an appetizer and main course, however all I managed to choke out in my new Spanish linguistic skills was "gracias," for which I was thoroughly rewarded with "de nada"—and I actually knew that it meant "you're welcome." My current language classes have led me on a path of infatuation with all things Spanish and Latino, and what better way to get to know a culture better than sampling food. **Mexico Lindo** is the first place I ventured to, likely due to the brochure they left on the bulletin board at language classes that had me salivating for weeks in anticipation.

Tucked away in the strip mall beside the Mayfield Inn, we arrived at the restaurant just after the lunch rush on a Saturday, and were warmly welcomed inside by one of the owners. The spotless, cheerful orange interior was a nice contrast to the drabness of Edmonton in November. In the corner sat a large chalkboard boasting the daily fresh specials. With approximately ten tables, the restaurant is a pretty little place. I appreciated the fact that they could have added in a few more tables, but kept it spacious.

On the basis of cultural research, we decided to keep it authentic with our drinks. My fiancé perused the beer list, which was notably all beer from Mexi-

REVUE

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co, and decided on the Negra Modelo (\$4.95), a favourite of his from journeys to Mexico. Caramel in colour, it went down nice and smooth and would prove to be a good accompaniment to his spicy lunch dish. I was curious about the Jamaica water, as I had noticed it this summer at Taqueria Dos Amigo (located at the downtown farmers market). At 75 cents a glass, or \$3.75 a pitcher, bets were on that this was a local favourite. I was helpfully informed that Jamaica water is an infusion made from the hibiscus flower. Bright pink like cherry kool-aid, but not too sweet or too sour, it tasted like a liquid version of the Chinese sweets called Haw Flakes, or for the uninitiated, slightly fruity.

Sipping away we continued to check out the menu and settled on our lunch items. We agreed to try an item with the Mexican Chorizo, as they make it fresh on site. We settled on the Choriqueso (\$9.95) described in the menu as melted cheese that is topped with Mexican Chorizo, served with fresh corn tortillas. It was only minutes for our Choriqueso to arrive, I was surprised by the massive amount of melted cheese. Nestled in the cheese was a chorizo sausage cut into pieces. Needless to say, it is

somewhat of a guilty pleasure to eat that much molten cheese at one time, but we dove in and enjoyed the combination of flavours. The cheese was gooey and warm, the chorizo was spicier than others I have tried, and the acidic bite of the Salsa Verde cut through the fattiness of the dish.

At home we make a Tortilla Soup from the Dona Tomas cookbook, and I wanted to compare versions—so we added an order of Sopa de Tortilla (\$5.95). A shallow bowl arrived at our table containing avocado, cheese, and crisp tortilla pieces. Then a chicken tomato broth was poured over creating a warm, cheesy, soupy concoction. The softness of the cheese and avocado contrasted nicely with the crisp tortillas. I enjoyed the soup but upon comparison to my home version found it somewhat lacking in spice and acidity. A wedge of lime on the side would be a nice addition.

FOR MY MAIN DISH, I decided on the Enchiladas de Pollo y Mole (\$10.95), or in other words enchiladas with chicken and mole sauce. Mole is a generic word for sauce, but typically the mole sauce that most North Americans are familiar with is Mole Poblano, which commonly features a mix of dried chili peppers, ground nuts, spices, Mexican chocolate, salt, and depending on the cook, a variety of other spices. The dish contained

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Whisky, not in a jar

HANNE LYNCH / hardly@vancouverweekly.com

When I think of Scotch, I think of my dad. I also think of punishing my tastebuds with strong spirits. Peter Gordon would like to change this. Gordon is the great-great-grandson of William Gordon, the founder of the Glenfiddich distillery, and is current chairman of the company. He wants people to learn to appreciate Scotch's subtle character, and to remind them Scotch is more than just "Dad's drink."

Gordon makes an unlikely evangelist—he is mild, bespectacled and reserved. When he offers a tight-lipped smile in response to my opening pleasantries, I start to worry this interview will go badly. I am, after all, not exactly Scotch's audience (being young, female, penniless). However, when I confess my whisky ignorance, Gordon opens up.

He starts with an explanation of the flavour development of Scotch. When it is first distilled and placed in oak casks for aging, the young spirit is "brash," with "no depth." In time, this "character is softened." The wood changes the whisky, and the longer it sits, the more flavour the wood imparts. This character extends to colour, the clear spirit darkening to mellow caramels and then darker browns as it ages. Different casks impart different flavours—Glenfiddich uses new ones (which impart a vanil-

WHISKY

GLENFIDDICH
PETER GORDON, CHAIRMAN
GLENFIDDICH.COM

la flavour) as well as used bourbon, wine and sherry barrels, which each give different qualities to the spirit. Gordon explains that a cask "breathes," and as the spirit mellows over the years, a certain amount of alcohol evaporates. This evaporated spirit is what is called "the angels' share."

Gordon pulls out small fluted and stemmed glasses, and opens a 12-year-old Scotch to start. He informs me that in tasting whisky, "we're not interested in strength," demonstrating how to dilute it with water (misconceptions busted—don't drink from a big tumbler, and really, it's OK if you don't drink it neat). I smell the Scotch before he dilutes it (it burns my nose a little), and then after. The dilution opens up the scent of the spirit and allows me to take much bigger breaths. Gordon informs me that Glenfiddich is known for its "slight smell of a pear." The Scotch tastes fruity, peppery and edgy on my tongue. Next, we taste a 15-year-old bottle. The process of pouring, diluting, swirling, sniffing and sipping strikes me as ritualistic and solemn,

like a tea ceremony. This Scotch smells more like honey than fruit, and feels fuller and smoother in my mouth.

FINALLY, Gordon reaches across the table to open a small wooden box. Ensclosed inside is a bottle of a 1977 single-cask vintage, available for \$660 exclusively at Willow Park Wines & Spirits in Calgary. Before we taste, he explains that most Scotch is blended from multiple casks, which creates a product that is consistent from bottle to bottle and year to year. This bottle (and all its compatriots—225 in total) is distinct because it comes from a single cask and year. We dilute, we swirl, we sniff, we sip. Gordon tells me this whisky has "no edge—nothing to stop your access to the flavour," and that the balance of the "character of the spirit with the character of the wood" is remarkable. I taste sweet butterscotch, a bit of spice, and Gordon tells me this Scotch reminds him of "high-class confectionary."

I lose my train of thought. I sniff, I sip. I taste the 12-year-old. I smell the 15-year-old. I sip. I try the 31-year-old. I ignore Gordon, forget my notes, and lose track of my questions. The whisky isn't harsh at all. Instead, it's mellow and complex. Is this an epiphany? Also, how do people taste stuff like this and talk at the same time? I am out of my depth, simultaneously fascinated and cowed.

Gordon is patient with my distraction. Perhaps he understands. When he was young, he didn't intend to join the family business. His family "didn't talk business" at home, so it wasn't part of his life until he started to work at the distillery to make money during a school break. Despite the menial tasks he started on—cleaning chimneys, painting gutters, scraping coal off stills—Gordon says the place "felt like home." So maybe, though he's spent most of his working life with



Scotch, he knows what it's like to be surprised by it.

As our interview winds down, I start hurriedly taking more sips, but I'm embarrassed. Am I being too brash? I've just started to get the hang of this, pleased this knowledgeable man with my enthusiasm, learned a couple things to tell my Scotch-drinking father, and now I can't figure out

how to finish my drink. After I leave, I realize that I left behind my own angels' share—a centimetre or so of the 1977 vintage, a Scotch more expensive than I am likely ever to taste again. I feel like a total failure. I might be a new convert, but clearly I've got years of penance to pay. I'll start with 12 years, Glenfiddich's youngest. ▼

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MEXICO

BY JIMMY GUNN PAGE 15

five soft corn tortillas filled with chicken, smothered with mole sauce and topped with some fresh slices of onion. I dug in and enjoyed the subtle flavours on my palate, and especially enjoyed the fresh onion. The richness of the onion contrasted with the rich spice notes in the mole sauce and texturally was a nice offset to the soft enchiladas.

I easily settled on the Torta Cubana (\$9.95), which is a Mexican sandwich stuffed with chorizo, carnitas (pork), tomato, onion, avocado, and cheese. His sandwich was a large, fresh, round bun that was packed full of meat and toppings. The sub was served warm, with the cheese melding all the spicy meat and toppings together. Although it was not listed in the description, the Torta Cubana also had mustard on it, which helped to brighten the flavours of the rich meat, cheese and avocado. My only sugges-

tion was that his sandwich looked a little *solitario* (lonely) on the big white plate it was served on, and we bickered back and forth on whether or not it needed to be served with a side dish. He felt that for the amount of meaty goodness, no side item was needed, and I felt that for aesthetic qualities a side item consisting of tortilla chips or salad may be a nice addition. Regardless, Torta Cubana was delicious in its melding of flavours and unpretentiousness.

Next, we delved into dessert. On the specials board we noticed the "Tres Leches" cake (\$5.95) and asked the owner what it was. She cheerfully advised us that we should definitely order it as she only makes it on the weekends and it usually sells out. "Tres Leches" translates into "Three Milk" and is a cake made up of evaporated milk, condensed milk and cream. Our dessert arrived promptly, and the cake was cut into a diamond shape, topped with whipped cream and sprinkled with cinnamon. Innocuous in appearance, it turned out to be the most amazing

dessert I have eaten in months. Upon driving my fork into the cake, I discovered it oozed cream. In your mouth the cake had a dense, heavy feel, but was surrounded by the velvety milk. The cinnamon was the perfect accent to this heavenly creation.

With a sigh of contentment and little desire to move we realized how very full we were from our lunch. We struggled out of our chairs and made it to the counter to pay. Our lunch, although a bit extravagant in portion sizes for the time of day, came to a very reasonable \$58, including tip. Before leaving we checked out the cooler in the restaurant, in which customers can purchase fresh Chorizo, Chistorra, Salsa Verde, Flautas, Burritos and other items to tide them over until their next visit.

The Spanish word "*Lindo*" translates to "lovely," and true to its name Mexico Lindo is a lovely little restaurant that serves up unassuming family created food. Simple and affordable, be sure to add this restaurant to your list of places to try. ▽

FOOD NEWS!

DISH WEEKLY

PADMANADI CHRISTMAS BUFFETS

Everyone and their (vegetarian) dog knows how awesome Padmanadi's buffets are. What could be better than the best in Indonesian vegetarian cooking, and as much of it as you want? I think that buffets are the best way to eat at Padmanadi—you can try things you're not familiar with without the fear of having to finish a lot of stuff on a mistake. Padmanadi's buffets are a great way to try new things and there's a spirit of fun and laughter that even more to the buffet.

This year there will be two Padmanadi Christmas buffets—the first is this Friday on Dec 5 (12 pm - 10 pm) and the second is on Fri, Dec 19 (12 pm - 10 pm). The cost is \$15, including GST and more information is available at padmanadi.com.

HOLIDAY WHISKY

If you thought that wine was a heartwarming part of the holidays, you should try the warmth of whisky! It can be consumed before dinner, after dinner, under the Christmas tree, prior to and during a Christmas party, in a rocks glass, a highball, or a sweet, sweet eggnog, and it makes a great stocking stuffer.

To help you pick out the best whisky for your tastebuds and price range, Devine Wines will be holding an event where samples will be tasted, and whiskies can be purchased. Everything from an eight-year-old

Tullibardine John Black to a 21-year-old Benromach. The cost for the evening is \$45, and more information is available at devinewines.ca

FLIP US A BIRD

Old cranks across the nation will be excited about this event. From Fri, Dec 5 until Fri, Dec 19, the CBC is holding a Turkey drive in support of the Edmonton Food Bank with the cheeky title of "Flip Us a Bird." Brilliant. Every government subsidy hating, dyed-blue-in-the-wool, liberal-baiting, gun-loving, coalition-protesting CBC opponent ought to be giving multiple turkeys to this one. That goes double for you, dad.

Turkeys can be dropped off at the Edmonton Food Bank (11508 - 120 St, Mon to Fri between 8 am and 4:30pm) and CBC Downtown (10062 - 102 Ave, Mon to Fri between 7 am and 6 pm) For more information visit edmontonsfoodbank.com. ▽

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Mexico Lindo a happy accident

JAN HOSTYN / jan@vuvueweekly.com

Just over two years ago, Gerardo Borbolla Alegria and Ivonne Garces De Isla were living in Mexico, the country where they were born and grew up. Today, they are the husband and wife team behind Mexico Lindo, a little Edmonton eatery with one incredibly huge kitchen.

When they first moved here two years ago, opening up a restaurant was not part of the master plan. The idea was to make authentic Mexican cuisine for people to take home. So Garces De Isla went to work in her little kitchen in their home and began making Mexican dishes, like burritos and flautas, to sell at the farmers' market. She said that lasted for about 10 months and they just got too busy—they needed a bigger kitchen.

After a lot of searching, they ended up where there are now, in a little strip mall across from the Mayfield Inn. Not because they loved the location, but because it was the only place that would lease to them.

Since their ultimate goal was to sell their products to grocery stores, they built the huge kitchen as kind of a mini-factory and opened the restaurant as a way to showcase Garces De Isla's cooking—kind of like a little side-adventure. Their target market was Ontario's large Mexican population but, after putting everything in place, they found out that although they met provincial regulations, they didn't meet federal ones. "If I wanted to sell outside of Alberta, I would have to change everything that is already set up." That was out of the question, so now Garces De Isla is using that huge kitchen to cook for the restaurant and to fill the take-out cooler that prominently occupies one wall.

With a chef for a mother and a foodie for a father, Garces De Isla says she became interested in food early on. Her father cooked too and might have been even better in the kitchen than her mother. Garces De Isla said that when he disappeared into the kitchen, "We knew we were going to eat good."

Since her mom was more interested in cooking than teaching her to cook, she taught herself to bake at age nine—by using a cake recipe she found on the side of a bag of flour. Cakes were her specialty for a while and then, at 13 or 14, she started cooking. And she opened up her first restaurant—sort of. She says that they lived on a ranch and, wanting to make some money, she "put a sign in the kitchen window saying she was going to make breakfast." And that's what she did, every day for 2 months—"cooked eggs 30 different ways," for 25 workers. She never did get paid for it, but it kept her busy.

SHE LEFT COOKING: Gerardo Borbolla Alegria and Ivonne Garces De Isla

PROFILE

GERARDO BORBOLLA
ALEGRIA &
IVONNE GARCES DE ISLA
MEXICO LINDO
780 444 7151

get degrees in both communications and graphic design, and to spend some time in England and France. Now she's gone back to cooking, both at the restaurant and at home. "Our food in the restaurant is exactly what we serve at home," says the Mexican, not Tex-Mex.

"Most of the food is prepared with the colours of the Mexican flag. That means lots of whites, reds and greens. She uses a lot of onions, tomatoes and chile peppers (many of which are green)—they can be found in almost every dish. But she says that using a few of the same ingredients certainly doesn't make the cuisine boring. "It's not just one kind of chile—there are tons." And even subtle changes can make a huge difference. So Garces De Isla experiments. Instead of marinating the onion in vinegar, sometimes she'll marinate it in orange juice. She said it mellows the acidic bite with a touch of sweetness and changes the complexity of the whole dish.

She also experiments with the specials, featuring a different lamb dish every Thursday.

Her enchiladas—a soft tortilla stuffed with either shredded chicken or feta cheese—are one of the most popular items on the menu. And no, not all enchiladas are the same. Garces De Isla says that even if two people cook the exact same recipe, "From hand to hand, it changes flavours. Even with the same ingredients, it won't be the same." That's why she's the only one who cooks at Mexico Lindo. "People like my cooking," she says. And she makes everything at the restaurant—the tortillas, the salsas, the sauces, even the chorizo.

Passionate seems too subtle of a word to describe Garces De Isla. She talked about a lot of things and, with each new topic, she jumped up from the table, grabbed one of her many hefty and detailed books, flipped through the pages and launched into a little lesson. I learned about Mexican history, the endless varieties of chiles and salsas and a bit about spices. "Oregano has a nice flavour if you use it in the right amount. Too much—yuck, not so good."

So Gerardo Borbolla Alegria looks after the customers. Working together and then going home together is an arrangement that is "sometimes good, sometimes bad." But so far it works. And they have that huge kitchen, so they never have to be too close if they don't want to be. ▀

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GREAT HEAD

by [illegible] and [illegible]

It's not unknown for Christmas to get associated with some deviation from moderation. Too much turkey, too much shopping, too many chocolate hedgehogs. It is one time of year that we can allow ourselves that extra bite/present/glass—and why not? We are with our loved ones, celebrating our myriad traditions and faiths. If not around Christmas, when?

I think that brewers around the world have figured out the specialness of the season. In recent years, there has been an appearance of beers designed explicitly and exclusively for Christmas. Their labels have wintery, Christmas themes, and they put a push on in December to sell them. Even the recipes reflect a Christmas spirit—adding certain spices and flavours not usual for beer. And, of course, they hike the alcohol content in anticipation of the spirit of immersing ourselves in, well, spirits.

I thought it an appropriate time to explore these adventurous and seasonal beers, before they disappear for another year. There is actually quite the lineup of Christmas beers these days; enough that I cannot discuss them all. So, instead, I picked four that offer a sense of the range and creativity behind the season.

Let's start close to home, as Big Rock, for the second straight year, enters the Xmas market with their Winter Spice Ale. They have overtly gone for the Christmas crowd by packaging the beer in a distinctive gift box—four bottles along with two specialty glasses and a small bag of ginger cookies. The reason for the cookies will become obvious in a moment.

The beer is reddish copper with a moderate, off-white head. It gives off a distinct note of cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger. It should, as the beer has those spices added to it to give it a holiday feel. I also detect some faint malt sweetness of toffee and sugar. It is a very inviting and attractive aroma.

The flavour starts off a bit disappointing, a bit thin and offering only a mild malt sweetness of toffee and nut. The beer becomes more interesting when the spices start to kick in. Some cinnamon and clove appears, but the dominant flavour is ginger. It dries out the beer and adds a layer of complexity not normally present in a beer of this style. Ginger lingers at the end, something like hops but more cookie-like.

Overall the beer is a bit too thin, but the ginger saves it, especially if you eat the cookie with it. The cookie seems to soften the spices and rounds out the beer.

Wandering only slightly farther from home, I picked up a bottle of Tree Brewing's Spiced Mid-Winter Ale from Kelowna, BC. At first it seems similar to Big Rock's offering, but the two beers quickly part ways in flavour profile. Tree's version is a dark reddish copper with a small ring of light tan head. It also has a spicy aroma, of nutmeg, allspice, cinnamon and clove, along with some light caramel sweetness. Its aromas are milder than the Big Rock version.

It is bolder in its flavour, however. The spices come out quickly, giving the beer a pumpkin pie feel. The base beer is moderately malty with a caramel and toffee note. Middle palate is the most beer like, with a distinct malt quality, like a rich amber ale. The finish has a lingering spiciness of clove and cinnamon. It finishes with a subtle alcohol warming.

It is a pleasant beer that is not shy with the spices. It may not be a "have a few" kind of beer, but it has enough going of both beer and spice to keep it interesting.

In terms of alcohol, these beers only turn up the volume a notch or two—Big Rock's is 6% and Tree's is 6.5%. The last two turn it up to 11, literally.

Gouden Carolus Christmas (made by Brouwerij Het Anker) takes Belgian brewing to its limits. Belgians pride themselves on creative, extreme brewing recipes and techniques. Gouden Carolus is big, 10.5% alcohol, and offers a bold, aggressive spiced experience. It is a rich mahogany brown with deep burgundy highlights. Its light tan head doesn't get large but hangs around in a pleasant layer in the glass, leaving a respectable lattice-shaped residue on the side of the glass (called Belgian lace). It has a complex aroma of rich dark fruit, including plum, raisin and cherry. It also has a noticeable sugary sweetness of molasses and Coca-Cola. The spices, cinnamon, clove and a touch of ginger, hang around at the back.

In the flavour, however, the spices dominate, with a complex mixture of pie spices, ginger, allspice and peppery spice from the yeast. There is not much malt quality to the beer. I find the spice additions compete with the yeast peppery-ness.

The beer is thinner than expected and it has a distracting alcohol heat (probably due to a too-warm fermentation). The beer is rather overwhelming and sharp. Too much hot alcohol and the spices are overdone, creating an overly aggressive beer. I certainly would not have more than one.

Finally there is St Bernardus Christmas Ale. The label screams Christmas, right down to the smiling monk wearing a Santa hat. This, too, is a complex, strong Belgian ale, running at 10% alcohol. However, despite the similar origins with Gouden Carolus, the beers part ways very quickly.

St Bernardus opens with a soft spice aroma, delicate dark fruit, clove, pepper and even a touch of orange backed up by an inviting malt sweetness. It is a hazy, deep copper-coloured beer with a formidable Belgian head that persists to the end.

The flavour is, at once, both subtle and complex. I pick up cherry, plum and raisin along with a brown sugar sweetness. The spices are myriad—cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, pepper—yet remarkably modest. They don't overwhelm the beer, but do add to the beer's malt base. It finishes soft with a touch of hop. There is no obvious sense that this beer is as strong as it is—the alcohol is well hidden. Everything in this beer is done with a delicate touch to create a very easy-drinking beer, given its demanding recipe.

Christmas is a time for sharing and giving. Give the gift of beer this Christmas and offer your friends and family some unique beers they won't be able to purchase in July. Merry Christmas. ♥

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One day on Powder Island



Rob Photo

KEITH LIGGET / keithl@vancouverweekly.com

DEEP in early morning darkness, the rumble of hot water and smell of coffee filled my kitchen. Outside, the Lizard Range rises invisible beyond falling snow. I grabbed my coffee, boots and poles and drove into the darkness.

This was a rare day. Through a friend on the inside, I'd found out about a mid-season opening for day skiing at Fernie's **Island Lake Lodge**.

CAT SKI DAY TRIPPER

I jumped at the invite. After the first of the year, cat skiing usually requires a three to four day commitment and an accompanying huge ding on the bank account. If you're not flush, choices are limited—which is where the right contact can come in handy.

But in 2008, the Lodge and its sister

operation, Powder Cowboy, are launching a new offering: day skiing throughout the season on a space available basis. As a privileged test case, I got to sample the experience early and it's one I won't soon forget.

Parking, I joined a knot of skiers standing on the uphill side of the four-wheel drive filled lot. The mountains remained hidden in the clouds. With a diesel rumble, a large red snow cat jolted out of the gap in the forest.

On the ride up, the sky lightened. Turning a final corner, the cat moved into a meadow where four huge log lodges stood shrouded in snow and the half-light of early morning.

In the basement of the Bear Lodge, we listened closely to a safety lecture from Duncan, our guide. We signed a long release and moved into the snow-covered meadow to practice transceiver technique.

Back in the cat, after 20 minutes' steady climb, the last bit up a narrow ridge with seeming precipitous drops, we reached a small knoll. The cat spun almost in place to point back downhill. We spilled out, grabbing our skis.

Duncan explained, "Since it's snowing, we'll do a couple runs over here in the trees, just to warm up, then move up into the higher terrain in a bit. I think it will clear late morning."

I looked off the unseen terrain on the ride up. It was steep, gladed and disappeared into a ghostly whiteness 100 meters away. How long was the run? A few hundred meters?

"Stay to the left of my tracks," Duncan said, "About half way down there's a little bench. Angle off to the left. At the gully at the bottom, go hard left. The cat will meet us at the end of the gully."

He headed out, sweeping effortlessly between the trees. One after another, we dropped in. Whoops and hollers echoed in the woods as I wait-

DISTRIBUTION PHOTO



Rob Photo

Powder daytripping

The cost includes lunch, powder, skis or board for the day and a shuttle from the parking lot to the Lodge or into the Powder Cowboy staging area. At Island Lake Lodge, day skiers and guests qualify for complimentary apres ski and a head in the bar at the end of the day, before the snow cat heads back to the parking lot.

SILVER STAR

Big White

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Spook van on the caravan

JEREMY DERKSEN / snowzone@vancouverweekly.com

A strange-looking camper van haunted the Rockies during the 2007-08 season. Across the front, two evil, bloodshot eyes were painted against a black background. Whistler. Revelstoke. Yellowhead Highway. It kept disappearing and reappearing like an apparition.

The van's side panels were painted with K2 logos and ski graf. There was no explanation for its odd appearance nor details of its mission. Its colourful mystique attracted my attention but I couldn't bring myself to break the wall of secrecy surrounding it, even when by chance it pulled into a gas station rest stop just as I was pulling out. The enigma had taken on a life of its own. It felt wrong to take a photograph. Call it superstition.

So instead I was left to wonder. If it was a group of pros on tour, I hadn't heard anything about it. If it was a promotional effort by K2, ditto. And the inexpert paint job didn't cry professional marketing. Maybe it was amateurs. But perhaps that was just the intent—to look amateur. Ski aesthetic fetishizes the indie, DIY look, so that's just what savvy marketers would want you to think. Maybe it was pros after all. Or was it indie film auteurs? Aging, legendary ski bums on a Sabbath-fuelled rampage? A couple of young prodigies with a



TOTALLY RANDOM

tricked out van and a thirst for epic adventure?

SOMETIMES I WAKE UP with the sound of those veiny red orbs boring toward me in the dark, emerging from a warp-drive level snowstorm on some deserted highway in the middle of the night. My journalistic spidey sense tingles with a sense of missed opportunity, having missed my chance to immerse myself in the spontaneous story and reveal its truth to you, dear readers

Yet I remain conflicted. There are omens that are better left alone, you might say. Depths I am afraid to confront. Like the strange fact that not one of my many traveling companions, on several trips throughout 2007-08, saw the same apparition. Sleep deprivation hangovers and road-weary vision nothing; I swear it was real.

I hope it reappears this year. If it does, I'll approach cautiously, camera and notebook in hand. I'll knock tentatively on the driver side window and wait for it to roll down slowly screeching against the dry rubber seal. I'll learn its secrets.

And then I'll carry them to my grave.

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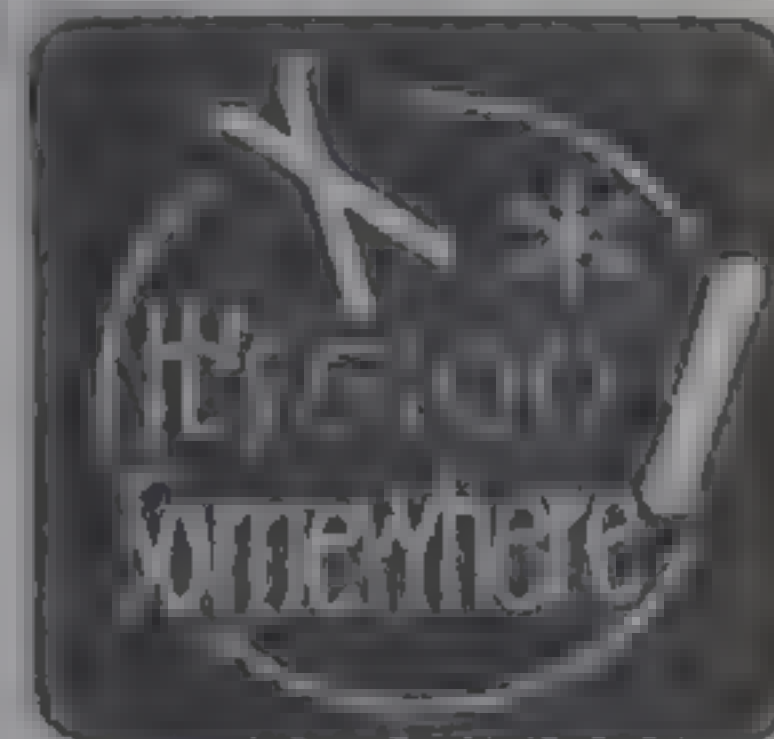
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Big storm brewing for resorts?

PHOTO: BARRY HARRIS / PHOTOGRAPHY.COM

Crisis. Depression. Meltdown. We're facing some scary stuff. As the snowball of recession warps into an abominable snowman, resort development and hill visits are speculated to take a long cliff-dive, sending blueprints and lift tickets into a pea-soup fog like we've never seen. Or, resorts will report record-breaking skier visit numbers for the third time in a decade.

There's a lot of speculation as to what may happen on the hill this year. We're entering what may be the worst economic crisis since the Dirty '30s, and there's no doubt it will affect you as a rider. It will cost you more just to fill your gas tank, your belly and to lay your head on a pillow, much less ride the lifts. You may not even have a job.

The most recent recession was in 2001, when shady accounting deals and the events of 9/11 caused a somewhat mild contraction in the economy. Ski resort pockets were hit hard but it wasn't because people were afraid to leave their houses—it was because it wasn't worth it. There just wasn't enough snow.

At the time, National Ski Areas Association president Michael Berry explained, "We're a weather-dependent business, pure and simple," affected more by the physical environment than the fiscal. There was a trend, however. Fly-to destinations suffered greater losses than expected for that season, but local resorts boasted increases in season-pass sales to locals. The message was people will ski regardless of the economy, and local hills may even benefit—they're more affordable and there's less to lose if the weather sucks.

This past season, the weather certainly did not suck. Accordingly, resorts enjoyed a record-setting 60.5 million visits in the US, and every region in Canada celebrated an average of 15 per cent growth—from 3.3 per cent in the Prairies to 27 per cent in BC—attributed to consistent dumps throughout the winter. European and Japanese accents were also more prevalent in chalets across the US and maintained in Canada.

American visits to Canadian resorts however, which peaked in 2002, continued to decline last year. Security gate line-ups were longer than usual and likely kept our southern neighbours at home—but our dollars were probably too similar to make the wait worth it. A recession might actually help them come across the border this winter, as our loonie slips below their bill again.

BUT A WEE LOONIE may not overcome a deep recession, and the Rockies and Purcells could remain quieter than usual. The overnight traveler is especially important to BC and Alberta—around half of all visitors have hotel pillow creases on their faces in the western resorts. Travellers tend to spend more money at their destination. No matter the snow, destination resorts will be hit harder when prices go up and paychecks go down.



Rob Plato

INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY

To get a clearer picture, a recent report prepared for NSAA by market researcher Nolan Rosall of RRC Associates compared two situations: poor economy and good snow versus poor economy and 'meh' snow. In the past two decades, resort visits were far better correlated with snow than the economy. While isolated resorts will feel the crunch as skiers and riders stay closer to home and choose cheaper day trips over extended stays, Rosall concluded consumer confidence is overruled by snow depth. To offset destination resorts' anticipated losses, many of them are offering multi-day discount passes, punch cards and deals with participating businesses such as hotels,

restaurants and retail stores to entice weary spenders.

Whether people decide to travel because the snow is great or their dollar is better, or they stay home because they have no money and the snow is mediocre, speculation may be pointless in light of something much greater down the pipe. Global warming. In the long term, efforts to reduce our ecological footprint will likely bode better for the ski industry than any economic maneuvering.

For the upcoming season, *The Farmer's Almanac* anticipates resorts in northeastern BC and northwest Alberta will be colder and drier than usual. Warming patterns further south however, are expected to bode well for southeastern BC. Chief Long Range Forecaster Joe Bastardi of Accuweather predicts, "[In the east,] December could be the

roughest month of a colder and snowier winter that could finish with another cold spell in late January and February ... [but] temperatures in the West will be warmer than last winter, and could be warmer than normal." He maintains northern Rockies resorts will have another gnarly year, but not quite as rad as last year.

Such formidable forecasts make it difficult to keep global warming in your frontal lobe when you're riding a huge powder keg, but the possibility you may not be skiing with your kids is very real. This spring, the UN Environment program reported the average glacial melting and thinning rate doubled between 2005 and 2006. Intertropical glaciers are expected to disappear within 15 years.

Since agreement on methods and targets to slow global warming is slow, combined with the terrifying fact

there was still no natural snow in Edmonton as of November 30, it comes down to you. Hopefully it's not too late.

RENEWABLE ENERGY credits (RECs) are the American ski industry's favourite green method. Resorts purchase kilowatt hours from green power providers—almost 500 million so far—offsetting CO2 production in other industries whose energy comes from green sources. Where 10 - 15 kg of CO2 emissions per year is equal to planting one tree, American ski resort green power purchases have theoretically planted more than 20 million trees.

Canadian resorts are opting for environmentally-friendlier energy sewage, materials and expansion management. Low-flush toilets, recyclable materials and wind power are becoming more prevalent at some Canuck ski hills. Global warming awareness is finally seeping into the ski industry's conscience.

If you want to be skiing or riding in the next 20 years, support green-friendly resorts like Sun Peaks—the first North American resort to be certified with the stringent environmental standard ISO 14001, for their systematic approach to setting and meeting environmental goals. Other resorts and ski operators are also getting on board. In Revelstoke, Eagle Pass Heliskiing offers each guest the opportunity to offset their heli ride's carbon emissions by buying carbon credits from Planetair. And Whistler has launched a renewable energy project that will offset their total annual energy consumption at Whistler Blackcomb. The Fitzsimmons Creek Hydro Project will produce 33.5 gigawatt hours of hydro electricity per year, enough to power the entire resort's winter and summer operations, including lifts, restaurants, snowmakers and everything else.

If you're looking for more ways to tread lightly, go to saveoursnow.com. Patrick Thorne, one of the environment industry's leading green campaigners, created the database which grades resorts from one to five stars for their "greenness," based on criteria such as policies on climate change, waste reduction and recycling, the use of cleaner fuels and other measures. He recommends travelling to resorts by train—Jasper, Banff and Whistler are all accessible via rail.

In the US, check which resorts have signed up to the NSAA's Sustainable Slopes Campaign. Avoid fake snow and lower-lying resorts that use fake snow, which draw water from lakes and rivers. Or, if you really want to be radical, take up cross-country skiing and keep close to home. It's cheaper, too.

It's likely this recession is going to be worse than anything the current skiing populace has ever experienced, but riding on grass is far more depressing than an economic depression. Making your trip as green as possible could keep some green in your pocket—and better yet, more white on the ground. ▀



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CONDITIONS REPORT

Local

Rabbit Hill — 35cm base, trace amounts of new snow. 3 lifts and 3 runs open.
Snow Valley — 30cm base, 3cm of new snow. All lifts and most runs now open.
San Ridge — 30cm base, no new snow. 3 lifts and 2 runs open.
Edmonton Ski Club — Open soon.

Alberta

Canada Olympic Park — Open soon.
Castle Mountain — Open Dec 13.
Lake Louise — 75-97cm base, 22cm of new snow. 5 lift and 29 runs open.
Marmot Basin — 43cm base, 8cm of new snow. 3 lifts and 13 run open.
Mt. Norquay — Open weekends only. 20-30cm base. 1 lift and 1 run open.
Nakiska — Open soon.
Sunshine Village — 80cm base, 23cm of new snow. 11 lifts and 97 runs open.
Towatnaw — Open soon.

B.C.

Apex — Open Dec 6
Big White — Open Dec 19.
Fernie — Open Dec 6.
Kicking Horse — 78cm base, 15cm of new snow.
Kimberley — Open Dec 19.
Mt. Washington — Open Dec 5.
Pemberton — Dec 12.
Powder King — 102-155cm base, 5cm of new snow.
Red Mountain — Open Dec 12.
Revelstoke — 76cm base, 9cm of new snow. 2 lifts and 10 runs open.
Silver Star — 25-39cm base, 10cm of new snow.
Sea Peaks — 35-44cm base, 7cm of new snow. 4 lifts and 4 runs open.
Whistler/Blackcomb — Open Dec 12.
White Water — 40cm base, trace amounts of new snow.

U.S.A.

49 North — Open soon
Big Sky — 61-91cm base, 30cm of new snow.
Crystal Mountain — Open Dec 5.
Great Divide — 61cm base. 1 lift and 2 runs open.
Lookout Pass — 13-18cm base.
Mt. Spokane — Open Dec 6.
Schweitzer Mt. — Open soon.
Silver Mt. Resort — Open soon.

*Opening dates can change depending on weather conditions.

All conditions accurate as of Dec 3, 2008.

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BOARD TIPS

BOBBY BARTLETT
bobby@vancouverweekly.com

If bending your knees while snowboarding was easy, every one would do it. But knee bends cause quad quivers and thus we see the classic beginner stance: arms rigid out in front, knees locked and legs ruler-straight. The would-be boarder zambonis his or her way down the hill, a slick snowless path in their wake. Why does every beginner start his or her snowboarding career like this? Because knee bends and squats, when held for longer than a breath or two, hurt. Now consider holding bent knees for several minutes over rises and dips on a waxed board careening downhill while maintaining your balance. That bloody hurts.

Bending your knees is the single most crucial element to snowboarding, as well as skiing, skating and a plethora of other activities that require balance and weight shifts. With bent knees, your hips and thighs, as your body's centre of gravity, are closer to the ground and more stable. The bum and legs muscles are contracted and act as springs to absorb the impact of terrain changes. Contracted muscles also propel your body as they release and contract again—a motion repeated trillions of times as you respond to the gradations of the hill.

All these little muscle contractions equal a burning sensation related in part to hydrogen and lactic acid build-up, by-products of your body breaking down energy to fuel the muscle cell. A natural response to burning thighs is to stand up straight, which eases the acid out of your quads as the muscles relax. Unfortunately, this not only reduces your ability to balance and respond to the terrain, but you also risk catching an edge—straight legs inevitably lead to flat feet.



So if you want to learn how to ride or improve your form, look at those joints halfway down your legs. Do they shudder at the thought of bending? Do they lock when you stand up straight? Do they and the muscles surrounding them shake if you have to hover over a gas station toilet?

FEW OF US CONSIDER duck walking as a natural form of transportation, but nothing could help you prepare better for the snowboarding season. A proper duck walk features upper thighs parallel to the ground with knees at a 90 to 120 degree bend (flapping arms optional). Try walking around the house like this, or better yet, at work when you leave your task and head to the bathroom.

If the duck walk seems a little absurd, contain your squats to the bathroom. Instead of sitting on the toilet, no matter how clean it is, hover over it. Boys, it's OK not to stand. Holding this stance for 30 to

60 seconds—and longer if you're "regular"—several times per day is a quick and dirty way to get critical squatting time without going to the gym.

If you'd rather relax while attending to nature, do squats during TV commercials. Keeping your chest up, bend your knees to 90 degrees and hold that for one commercial at each break, working up to holding the squat for the entire commercial break. For added pain, do little hops in the squat position, alternating between holding the squat and squat hops during paid programming.

All the squat training in the world won't matter if you don't apply it after you strap on your boots. But once you remember the pain you forced yourself to endure through every bathroom trip and commercial since you read this, your growing pains on the hill will be over before you can flap your arms and say "quack." ▽

Skiing and bobsledding

SNOW ZONE

FALL LINES

MARK GILBERT
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He may be turning 36 next week but Austria's Hermann Maier proved he still has it after winning the men's super-G at Lake Louise on Sunday. Nicknamed "The Terminator" for his beastly attacks on the course, Maier won his first race since 2006 and the 54th of his storied career.

This only slightly overshadowed Canadian John Kucera's second place finish. Kucera won this same race back in 2006 but on this day he was left standing on the lower platform, looking up at his childhood idol. In remarks afterwards Kucera paid homage, saying it's not often you get to share the podium with your idol. Then he concluded that hopefully this would be the last time he was on the lower step.

Canadian skiers were not so fortunate



in the downhill race the day before. After impressive training runs the men's team withered to disappointing double digit finishes. Italian skier Peter Fill took home the inaugural race of the year honours winning his first career World Cup event.

The women's bobsleigh team had an impressive start in Germany, capturing

gold on the Winterberg track. We may be city rivals in other sports but on this day Calgary's Helen Upperton and Edmonton's Jenny Chiochetti combined to guide their sled to victory. Edmonton's other great sledder Pierre Lueders was not quite as successful as his men's team finished out of the medals in fifth place. ▽

DAYTRIPPER

ed my turn. Immediately, I lost myself, swinging over to little openings for a couple turns and then back into the trees. The steepness was perfect. The snow light, knee to mid-thigh deep. I turned forever and still no bench. I wondered if I'd missed it. It flattened and then dropped again. Halfway? I veered left, staying inside Duncan's

Finally I popped out of the trees into a wide gully sweeping hard left. At the bottom sat the red cat. As we loaded up, Duncan said, "Let's do that again."

A nodding breathless agreement from the 12 climbing into the cat.

WE RETURNED

spun on the knoll. Moving right, we took a fresh line through the glade. As we reached the gully the second time, streaks of blue broke the monotony of the clouds and the snow stopped

Three rocky spires rose just below the rime-encrusted ridge. The gray white wall rose to a now blue sky. We headed to the very base of the wall. We climbed and climbed. Switchbacking, the cat angled up to the rock. Looking down, we saw the lake, the island and dimly the red roofs of the four lodges in the meadow by the lake. They were

miniature. Still we climbed.

At the turnaround, Duncan and Tyler, the tail guide, moved off into the snowfield and dug a pit. A little radio chatter with the other two cat guides and Duncan came back to where we waited.

"I think we're all set." He motioned to the steep unbroken snowfield dropping off the base of the wall, reaching maybe a kilometre toward the first of the spires. "That's ours." The group let out an involuntary whoop. Bluebird skies. Mid-thigh deep powder, and a warm ride back to the top. It doesn't get any better.

The tree runs were maybe 1500 vertical feet of consistent slope. This one would be well over 2000 feet. Consistent, steep and long. We dropped in, again staying left of Duncan's tracks. There's lots of room. And lots of runs.

At the end of the day, after a last run in a half-light not much different from the early morning, we returned to the Bear Lodge. A fire burned and a pot of soup with bread sat on the bar. We ate soup. Over beers and glasses of wine we regaled one another with tales of dropping into drifts and face shots

All too soon the four day-trippers were called. We loaded into the cab for the ride to the parking lot and a futile return to a semblance of normalcy. ♡

World's Biggest Refrigerator?

FALL LINES

HART COLBERT
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Signs of a worldwide recession don't appear to be dampening the ambition of developers in Suffolk, England. These guys just received approval to build the world's first indoor winter sports resort. I've seen indoor ski hills before but this one dwarfs them all.


Encompassing 350 acres, the resort will include a 70-metre wide by 415-

metre long slope. Hopefully they won't forget about the terrain park. Surrounding the ski slope will be facilities for 14 other winter sports including skating, curling, ice climbing and bobsleigh. Construction time is expected to take three years and the price tag has been set at \$700 million dollars.

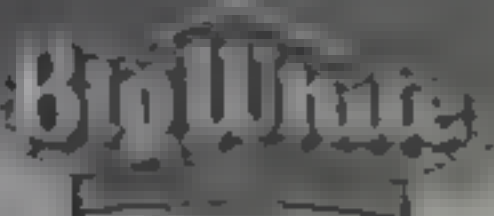
And what do you call such a venture? How about "SnOasis." Just a guess but I bet the lift ticket prices are going to be a bit steep. ▼

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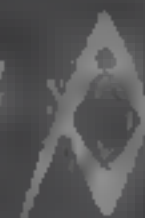
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Mountains teach hard but valuable lessons

BOOK REVIEW BY JENNIFER HARRIS

Climbers know that if you go up a mountain, you will come back a changed person. Two books, *Forever on the Mountain* and *Three Cups of Tea*, chronicle real stories of amazing people who return irrevocably altered after enduring hardship on the mountain. The former tells the tragic story of a 12-man expedition to Denali (Mt McKinley), while the latter is an inspiring tale of how one American climber transforms failure on K2 into an unlikely success story in the Middle East.

Both have lessons to teach about our relationships with nature, with our fellow beings and with ourselves. As a new alpine season begins—one that can turn the harsh mountain environment even harsher with unpredictable snow, ice and sudden weather shifts—it's a good time to be reminded that with risk comes reward, but also

ADVENTURE

FOREVER ON THE MOUNTAIN
BY JAMES H. TABOR
VW NORTON AND COMPANY, 432 PP, \$33.50

THREE CUPS OF TEA
BY GREG MORTENSON AND DAIRY OLIVER BROWN
PENGUIN BOOKS, 308 PP, \$16.95

potential consequences.

Forever on the Mountain tells the story of the 1967 Wilcox-Snyder expedition, in which seven men died in one of mountaineering's greatest controversies. Infighting, conflicting reports and bureaucratic whitewash have buried the truth behind the tragedy for over 40 years. Reconstructing the expedition in forensic detail, author James Tabor dissects the official inquiry, examines expedition records, park service radio transcripts and logs and interviews

everyone involved, including survivors and relatives. His thorough recounting creates a vivid picture of 12 men struggling against one of the world's most treacherous mountains—in league with Everest and K2—and of the circumstances that led to the disaster.

It may seem academic to dredge up the past but as Craig Medred, an accomplished mountaineer and resident Alaskan, tells Tabor, "I'd love to talk about the Wilcox Expedition because a lot of people are under the illusion it couldn't happen again." Tabor sheds new light on the controversy, offering careful critique and pointed observations to reveal what the tragedy can still teach us 40 years later.

NEXT TO THIS wrenching tale, *Three Cups of Tea* is a refreshing affirmation of life. After an emergency rescue prevents him from summiting K2 in an

attempted tribute to his late sister, Greg Mortenson descends heartbroken, weak and disoriented. Losing the trail, he stumbles into a high mountain village in Pakistan's Karakoram range and is nursed back to health by the villagers, to whom he forms a deep bond.

Discovering that the children have no school building, taking classes outside in the cold and writing on the ground with sticks to practice math, he sees a way to both pay tribute to his sister and help the village. Despite being broke and completely inexperienced, he vows to build a school.

This new mission takes Mortenson through high mountain passes, war zones and Taliban territory as he encounters native Pakistanis, American philanthropists, heads of state and terrorists. To date, as director of the Central Asia Institute, he has built over 50 schools in Pakistan and

Afghanistan. His mission to bridge cultural divides and promote peace through education is a captivating story of perseverance and compassion.

It's been said that when you confront a mountain, you confront yourself. These stories present both the darkest and the most noble aspects of human character, challenging readers—climber or otherwise—to examine their own place in the world. As we variously head out to mountains, glaciers, icefalls and trails, we can make wise choices, test our limits and overcome obstacles, or we can repeat mistakes and put ourselves and others at risk.

It helps, through books like these, to come closer to understanding both sides and appreciating the volatile dividing line of chance. No matter what going up a mountain is a life-altering experience. But what really matters is how you live your life afterwards. ▽

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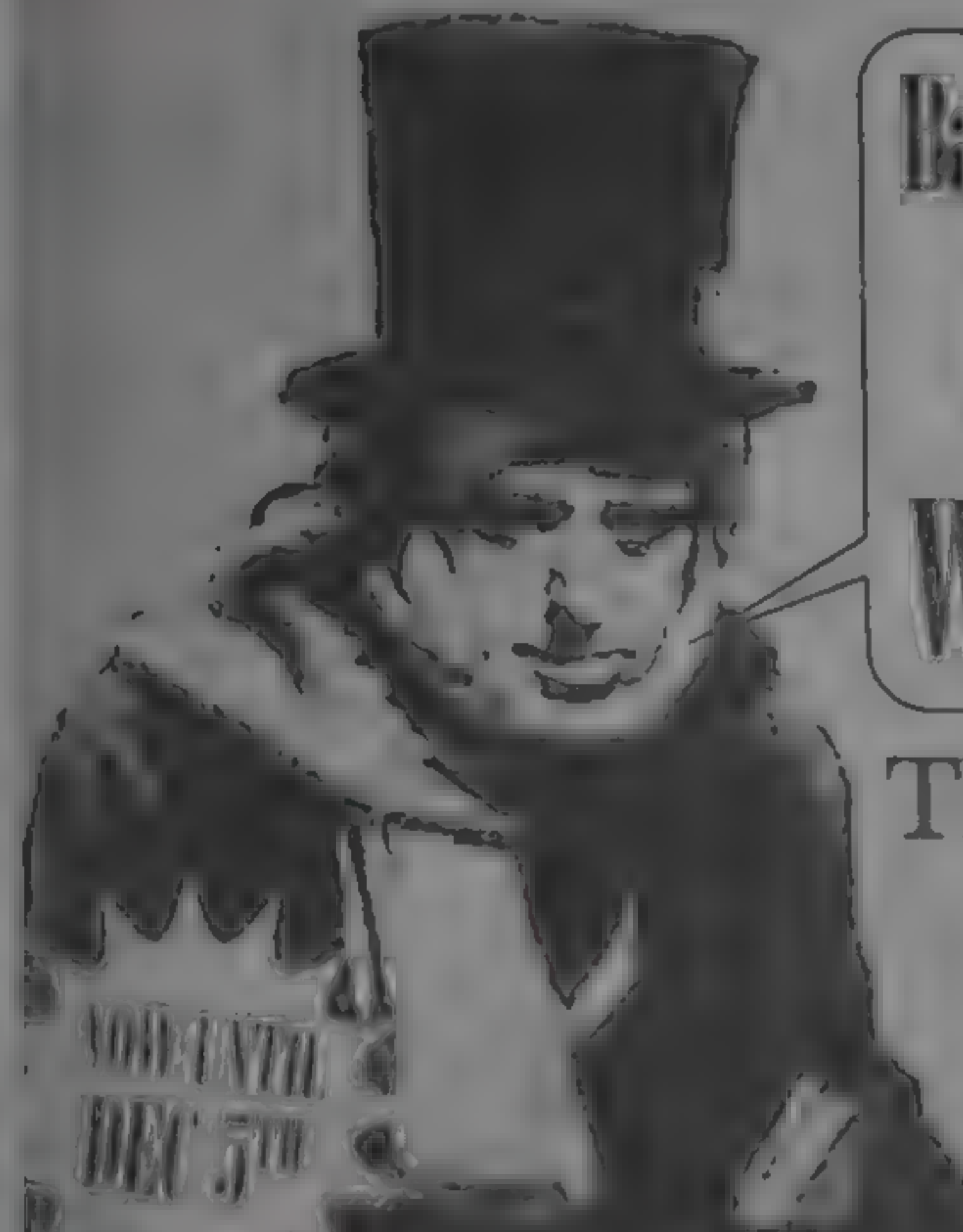
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The sailor's waltz

Bob Rasko twinkles his toes in
Amy Defelice's take on *Sailor's Song*

PAUL BLUMBY / PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY

Bob Rasko's previous team-ups with Amy DeFelice have given him quite a spectrum of a characters to play: she had him take a regal turn as Henry the Fifth, then cast him as a different kind of royalty in Adam Butterfly, giving Rasko the role of an '80s gay-porn icon named Johnny Allcock (a performance that netted him a Sterling nomination, though he jokingly wonders if prowling a stage with a "stuff-job" either got him the nomination or cost him the win). Pairing up once more, DeFelice has given Rasko another curious character to figure out in *Sailor's Song*, which kicks off this year's Roxy Performance Season. He's a blue-collar merchant sailor with a tendency to burst into dance.

"When Amy said she was interested in me doing [*Sailor's Song*] and checking to see if I was available, she said 'Oh, and there's dancing.'" Rasko recalls over a bulging burger and fries in a downtown diner. "What kind?" he probed. "Very Gene Kelly."

It's not an answer that would hook every actor in town, so it's fortunate that this isn't the first time Rasko has been 'round the dancefloor. He established his sealegs for the artform with stints in the Alberta Ballet and as an understudy for *Singing in the Rain* at the Mayfield a few years back. But that doesn't mean these dances have been easy as one-two-three. In fact,

PREVUE

(THU, DEC 4 - SUN, DEC 14 (8 PM NIGHTLY, 2 PM SUN))
SAILOR'S SONG
WRITTEN BY JOHN PATRICK SHANLEY
DIRECTED BY AMY DEFELICE
CHOREOGRAPHY BY AMY DEFELICE
CASTING BOB RASKO, TWILA MACLEOD
VANESSA SABOURIN, GEORGE SZILAGYI
ROXY THEATRE (10708 - 124 ST), \$15 - \$25

that waltzy rhythm has been one of trickiest parts

"We had a few workshops where we were learning the Vietnamese waltz. I've waltzed before, at weddings or whatever, and apparently I wasn't doing it properly," he laughs. "It was exhausting—the posture, and trying to do it properly. The waltz gave us a little bit of a smack-down, but other than that, it's been good."

RASKO CALLS *Sailor's Song* a "memory play"—in the footloose shoes of Rich the sailor, the script finds him looking back a few years to a time when his heart was a tug-o-war between two sisterly beauties. As the seaside story's emotive moments ebb and flow like tide, the highest crests of emotion bring the characters to dance.

"I think there's a saying about musical theatre: 'When the moment is too much.' When the only way you can interpret these feelings is by singing it, that's when you sing," Rasko says. "It's kind of the same

thing [here]: the only way of being able to express this is to dance this. Words aren't enough."

The play was written by John Patrick Shanley, an Oscar- and Tony-winning playwright who we'll be seeing a bit more of this year when the Citadel unveils his darker, Pulitzer-prize nominated *Doubt*, a *Parable* (which is also being turned into a movie starring Philip Seymour Hoffman and Meryl Streep). Although Rasko was unfamiliar with Shanley's work prior to getting the role, he's found an affinity for the way his character was constructed.

"It's actually really nice to take a typical blue-collar kind of guy, but not make it a caricature of a blue-collar person," Rasko says. "The guy's not an idiot; in a way there's a lot of philosophy about life that happens. So it's nice to be able to take somebody who's in that line of work but who's a thinker, and who wants something more, who doesn't want to necessarily stay in that line of work and feels like there's something else. It wasn't just this caricature of a working guy."

And of course, it surely doesn't hurt that the role has Rasko dancing with a pair of seaside sirens, Twila MacLeod and Vanessa Sabourin.

"To be stuck dancing with them for a month ... it's very, very difficult work," he laughs. "Y'know, someone has to do it, so it might as well be me." ▼

Fake plastic trees

Malin, Beauchamp critical of the
'natural' prairie in *Passage*

SARAH HAMILTON / hamilton@vancouverweekly.com

As you touch down from a flight into Edmonton, whether as a visitor or visitor, you are mesmerized by the topography. From the sky, the land is shades of green and brown, measured into perfect squares with roads running between the different farms. As you come closer to the ground, you begin to notice the other features of the land, such as farmhouses, silos and, eventually, the crops that colour the land from the sky. You also can't help but notice the absence of trees on that descent into Edmonton. Aside from the occasional pine or spruce, the land is strikingly flat. *Passage*, a new exhibition at Harcourt House, is a collaboration between Lynn Malin and Elizabeth Beauchamp that addresses just that fact.

In "Lightscares," a series of four, light-box-framed works, Lynn Malin attempts to articulate this experience of both the aerial and ground perspectives of the prairie landscape. The works are abstracted land forms on Lexan sheets with scores and grids imposed on top of the geographical features. Framed in slick steel, the works take on a commercial look; they'd look more at home in a shopping mall or pedway than in an art gallery.

At the end of the room is Elizabeth Beauchamp's work "Texting Tom." The shadow of a tree blows in the wind next to a long text message to painter Tom Thomson. The message, written in text shorthand, articulates the gap between Thomson's "Jack Pine" painting—which, in her artist statement, Beauchamp says "struggled to thrive, growing out of a rock, facing the strong north wind. Surviving everything nature could throw at it"—and our gradual acceptance of artificiality. After reading the text message, the dancing shadow becomes more peculiar; the tree is plastic.

THE THIRD PLACE in the exhibition is "Passage," the title collaboration between Malin and Beauchamp. Malin's Lexan paintings are used once again, but this time the sheets are pulled out of the light box and sliced into large squares, arranged in a grid facing Malin's other works. Without the bright light, the markings on the plastic become

VIZ ARTS

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
PASSAGE
WORKS BY LYNN MALIN, ELIZABETH BEAUCHAMP
HARCOURT HOUSE (10215 - 112 ST)

more apparent. The Lexan, held onto the wall with white nails, ripples without structure. The chalk, pastel, paint and graphite reflect the light, rather than emit it. Standing back a few feet, the dissected landscapes start to look like a topographical map of Western Canada, with our perfectly-measured-land-survey geography

In her artist statement, Malin says her work addresses our attempt to control nature, all the way from the meridian lines of the Dominion Land Survey to our need to build a fence in our yard. Beauchamp compliments Malin's perspective by going further and arguing that our need to control goes beyond just the land and into vegetation, such as trees, flowers and grass.

Malin and Beauchamp both articulate a concern about this and through *Passage* provide a reflection on this impulse by taking apart the landscape and emulating it in shadows, drawing attention to its artificiality. Beauchamp balances out Malin's work with "Texting Tom." Just as the Alberta landscape is sparsely treed, so are Malin's "Lightscares." Even the occasional tree that arises on the prairie is subject to criticism; they are often planted as natural shields from the wind. In defence of Beauchamp's work, her plastic tree is more authentic than those prairie wind-breakers. We know that the plastic tree is not real (in spite of Beauchamp's concern that those boundaries are getting fuzzy). If you don't think about it, the cultivated lines of coniferous trees on the side of the road look just as natural as everything else, and that's where Malin's interest in controlling nature joins with Beauchamp's worry that we're losing it all together.

The works, when viewed collaboratively, challenge how we, as Albertans, see our "natural" geography: that the prairie, though touted as the "Last, Best West" is just as cultivated and artificial as our own front yards, Astroturf or not. ▼

In search of the youth crew

Studio captures the confusion of being newly grown-up

Photo: [illegible] / [illegible]

Theatre in this town is hardly a young person's game, particularly when you're talking about the bleachers: the average Edmonton audience makes you wonder if theatre subscriptions are being handed out with retirement packages these days. There's no doubt multiple reasons for that, but surely one of the more important is that theatre as a medium in this town seems patently disinterested in exploring any aspect of young lives directly: teens and twentysomethings are much better off turning to books, film and music if they want to see their lives reflected in fiction.

It's right that Studio Theatre should be on the forefront of trying to engage a young audience, if only to ensure their students will have a living in the future. So long as they keep producing plays like Nicole Moeller's *Without You*, they'll guarantee an audience of theatregoers for years to come.

Without You follows Gabrielle (Samantha Duff) and Scott (Matthew McKinney) as they stumble towards the biggest decisions of their young lives: Gabe whether she should continue her stalled

REVIEW

UNTIL SAT, DEC 6 (7:30 PM)

WITHOUT YOU

DIRECTED BY BRADLEY MOSS

WRITTEN BY NICOLE MOELLER

STARRING SAMANTHA DUFF, MATTHEW MCKINNEY,

VINCENT FORCIER, BLYTHE HAYNES

STUDIO THEATRE (112 ST & 87 AVE), \$10 - \$20

music career, Scott if he should go finish his graduate work in London, and both of them if they should actually go through with the marriage he spontaneously proposed. It's a quintessentially twentysomething story—and Moeller doesn't entirely avoid cliché in its telling—brought to life with a few more sly asides but just the right amount of exasperation, confusion and helplessness.

MOELLER IS HELPED in that regard by the cast, who almost roundly seem comfortable in skin that's the appropriate age. Duff is brassy and bold as her drifting musician, and though she has enough energy to take up half the stage when she's called on she's better in Gabrielle's more private moments, reflecting on what she's done or about to do with a reserved spontaneity that captures perfectly the spirit of someone slow-

ly figuring life out. McKinney is never asked to go big, but his hang dog grounds the play in Scott's meek cocoon, the foggy place he's decided to hide in while trying to resist his creeping responsibilities to school, Gabe and himself. In sharp contrast to McKinney's sombre performance, Vincent Forcier has buckets of fun playing a rotating cast of characters around the pair, most notably Scott's, boisterous, whisky-soaked prof, the dippy musician who might be Gabe's real true love and Scott's best friend, a blunt, beer-swilling dude who tries to help him get over it.

It's that blend of humour with life's more crushing realities that really makes *Without You* work, though. Moeller seems well-attuned to the fact that the prevailing mood of young people these days is confusion, the nagging fear that you're doing everything wrong, and her bounces between making fun of that fact and getting floored by it make for a play that's both laugh out loud funny and touchingly vulnerable. The production is proof that, even if the audiences aren't getting any younger, Edmonton is still producing young talent with refreshing regularity. ▽

Wanted needed

BOOKS

HOPSCOTCH

JOSEF BRAUN

hopscotch@vancouverweekly.com

The titular figure of John le Carré's *A Most Wanted Man* (Viking, \$32) is as diminutive and weary-looking as the multitude of parties wanting him are immense and powerful. His name is Issa, a vagabond with "a look of winter," a half-Russian, half-Chechen in his early 20s. He appears right there in the novel's wonderful first line, emaciated and brooding, an unsanctioned tourist stalking Hamburg in a black overcoat that renders him only frailer and more conspicuous. He is, by my measure at least, a rather hysterically devout Muslim, though his humourless, righteous, half-crazed demeanour may be partly the result of illness, perhaps partly of torture, not to mention the dark, grueling journey stowed somewhere in the belly of the ship that brought him to this not-altogether-friendly German port. There's also the implication that Issa might be a terrorist. Whatever the case, his presence trips alarms all over. He means many things to many people, and he promises to prove useful in many ways, some of which the reader won't likely be able to imagine before reaching this superb thriller's final chapter.

In interviews le Carré has said that as a young man he invested institutions with

the qualities he'd have liked to find in parents. It's a rich observation, not only for what it tells us about le Carré—the notion he refers to being British intelligence for whom he was once a bona fide spook—nor just the latent desire for authorities to whom we may submit for what it says about the persistent nature of patriarchy: in whichever form it takes, seems ever the foil of the more worrisome heroes of fiction. And in le Carré's milieu there's always reason to worry.

No less than three of the central characters in *A Most Wanted Man*, the three we can come closest to calling heroes, perform vital actions dictated by a troubling paternal legacy. Issa is the unhappy beneficiary of a tremendous sum left to him by a dead father he loathes. Bruce, the affable, 60-year-old Scottish proprietor of a Hamburg bank, finds himself obliged to aid Issa due to the compromising legacy of his own father, whose business of financial management, both in its legitimate and crooked forms, Bruce has carried on in his perfunctory fashion. Annabel, the young, idealistic, but very smart and more-than-capable activist lawyer who takes Issa's case, struggles with the fact that for all her overt, deep-seated rebellion, she too has taken on the same vocation as her father, perhaps as a method of somehow doing good through the very same means her father

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

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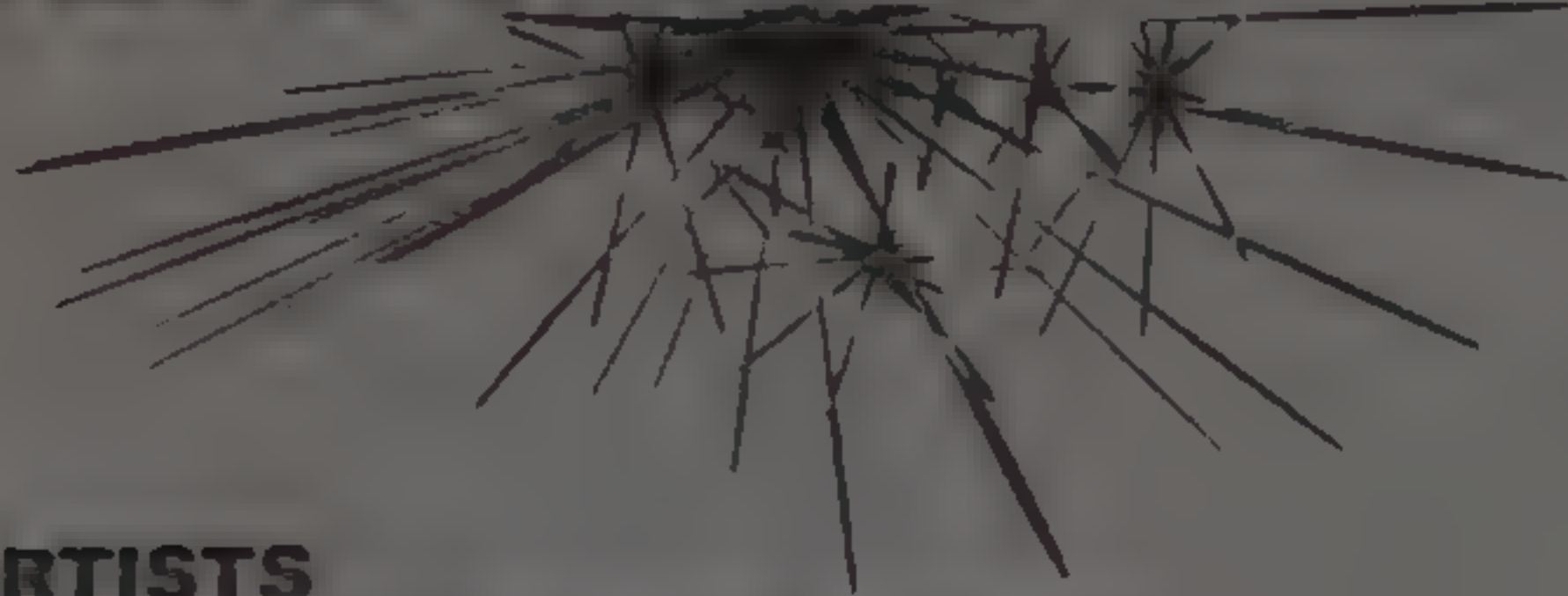
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Deadline for Submissions: 4:30 PM, Thursday, January 28th 2009

Installation: October 2009

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ALBERTA AVENUE STREETSCAPE IMAGES

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Budget: \$2000 per image CAD (maximum, all inclusive), maximum of five images per artist

Deadline for Submissions Extended to: 4:30 pm Friday, January 9th, 2009

Installation: May 2009

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Installation: August 1, 2009

An information package for the above competitions can be downloaded from our website:

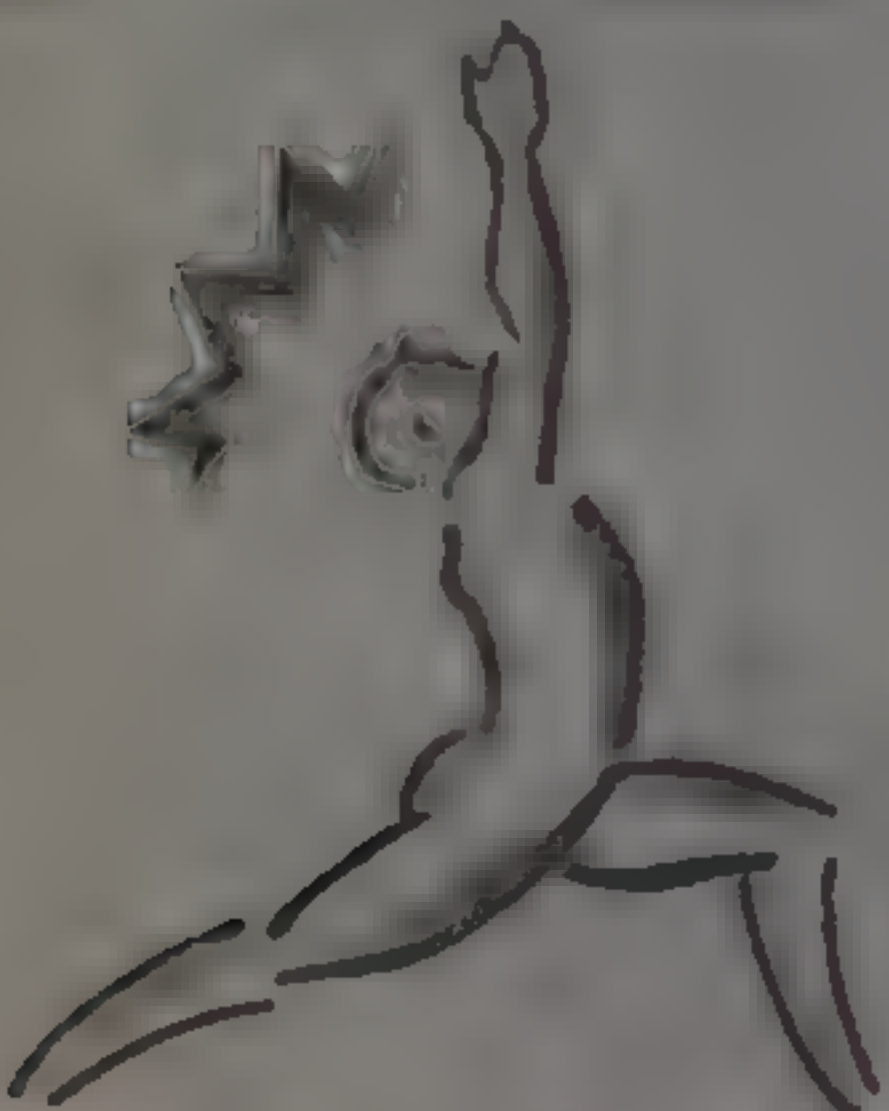
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PREVIEWS

CHRISTMAS CAROL

DIRECTED BY ROB BAXTER

ADAPTED BY S. SPARKS

THU, DEC 4 - TUE, DEC 23

CITADEL THEATRE (3828 - 101 AVE) \$68 - \$93

PAUL BLINOV / blinov@vuvueweekly.com

It's like a little Christmas present for Jeremy Baumung: fresh from his role as Mr William Collins in *Pride and Prejudice*, the young actor's back on the Citadel stage, picking up a handful of roles in the ninth annual production of *A Christmas Carol*.

Baumung's smile is audible over the phone while he talks about being part of the show—"I think it put me in the Christmas spirit," he laughs, and he probably isn't the only one in town—and working with its regular core cast who, according to Baumung, know their roles so well it's scary.

"Tom and I have this scene at the beginning of the play where I play this down-and-out character whose gone bankrupt recently and borrowed a bunch of money from Mr Scrooge," he says. "And I go to him on Christmas Eve, and I ask if I can obtain a week's delay. At the start of the play, Tom's Mr Scrooge is just ~~scaring the shit out of me~~ just scares the shit out of me.

"All I have to do is react," he adds, laughing. "You don't have to try very hard when you're acting with someone like Tom Wood."

Though he's seen the show a few times—really, who in Edmonton hasn't?—this marks the first time Baumung's been involved in the actor side of the classic Dicken's tale, taken on a life of its own here in Edmonton. Baumung's filling in here and there with a handful of minor roles, and getting the behind-the-scenes peek some of the magical show moments which dazzled him as an audience member.

"The only downside to me doing the show is now I know all the secrets," he says. "There's the knocker where the face pops out, or the Scrooge in three places

at once, and all these other little magical things. And now I know this stuff. It's not a bad thing, but one of the neat things going through rehearsals [is] I would see something happen and go 'Oh, THAT's how they did that.'"



LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

DIRECTED BY FARREN TIMOTEO; MUSIC BY JEFF UNGER

STARRING JENNY MCKILLOP, AMANDA NEUFELD,

CAVIN BERRY

FRI, DEC 5 - SUN, DEC 7

TRANSALTA ARTS BARN (10330 - 84 AVE) \$12.50 - \$23.50

XANTHE COUTURE / xanthec@vuvueweekly.com

You don't have to worry about Grandmother getting eaten by a wolf in the Alberta Opera Musical Theatre for Young People's latest production of the classic fairy tale *Little Red Riding Hood*. The timeless story has been revamped to reflect the modern-day experiences of school-aged children. The Wolf has become Wolfgang, a bully and fellow student of Little Red Riding Hood, or as Alberta Opera Musical Theatre For Young People Artistic Director Farren Timoteo calls her, Red.

Timoteo explains that while the 45-minute musical adaptation is appropriate for all ages, in particular he's hoping to reach schoolkids. His production uses the negative attitude and behaviour of Wolfgang towards Red as the context in which

to discuss bullying and acceptance in the setting of their elementary school.

"We read version after version—there are a billion out there—but we stayed true to the basics ... but the Wolf is non-predatory," Timoteo laughs.

The play begins with the overbearing Wolfgang tormenting Red by stealing her lunch, but before the play takes the audience on the usual trip to Red's Grandmother's house, there are some added twists.

"We stop in at Wolfgang's Grandmother's house to see where he lives and

under what circumstances," Timoteo says. "Wolfgang's Grandmother thinks that he needs to be more like a wolf and go out and hunt. She threatens to take him out of school if he doesn't find food."

As the play unfolds, a variety of original songs, composed by Jeff Unger, break up the dialogue. Though it's premiering this weekend at the TransAlta Arts Barns, the show will be touring around to 310 schools in Alberta and British Columbia by over the course of the run, a fact that has Timoteo particularly excited.

"Some children are really new to the musical theatre side of things," he says. "So it's nice to go to the rural areas of Alberta because they typically don't have ~~musical theatre~~ musical theatre."

Timoteo loves the infectious energy that the youth audiences bring to the performance, though even that isn't without its pitfalls.

"Kids are really honest," he says. "If you don't hold their attention they'll let you know. Hopefully the kids can learn a lesson from the story, but at the very least they enjoy the music and the characters." ▽

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Looking at you, Kidd

Writer digs through her past for
An Uncommon Biography

Alexis Kienlen / alexis@vuweekly.com
Any Other Woman: An Uncommon Biography is a new non-fiction offering from Monica Kidd. Kidd, who grew up in Edmonton, Alberta, has already established herself with an impressive collection of published works, including two novels and two books of poetry. In her newest and first non-fiction book, Kidd, who currently lives in Newfoundland, returns to her roots to investigate the story of her great-grandparents. Her interest in the story is initially sparked by her grandmother's recollections. Kidd, who has worked as a journalist, uses her research skills to start uncovering the story of her great-grandparents, Andrew Zak and Rosalia Patala, both originally from Slovakia. In the early 20th century, Kidd's great grandfather Zak had proposed to Patala in a letter. Patala, a recent immigrant, accepted his proposal and travelled from New York to the Crowsnest Pass to marry a man that she knew only through correspondence. Together, the couple faced the hardships of life in a new land and raised their children. Kidd is determined to find the

BOOKS
ANY OTHER WOMAN
BY MONICA KIDD
NEWEST PRESS, 144 PP, \$19.95
answers to the holes in the story. While training to be a medical doctor in Newfoundland, Kidd's quest takes her on frequent trips to Alberta, where she travels around to meet with various relatives and explore places that might hold answers to her questions. The story uncovers some of the history of early Alberta and the hardships faced by immigrants who risked their lives and health to work in the coal mines at the beginning of the 20th century. **KIDD IS ABLE** to use both her talents as a poet and her skills as a former journalist to weave her personal reactions and insights into the story, as she tries to find facts which continuously elude her and stop her from discovering the truth. The book, like Kidd's literary history, is an example of hybridity, blending personal insight and observations with narratives shared by others and his-

torical information. It's also a hybrid, as it is told in two portions; one which takes place in Alberta and one which takes place in Slovakia. In the second half of the book, Kidd travels to Slovakia to intern in hospitals as part of her medical training. She is able to continue the quest she began over a year in the country of origin of her great-grandparents. Aided by new friends, she travels throughout the Slovakian countryside, learning about the forces that led people to immigrate to the New World. In both Alberta and Slovakia, Kidd meets a cast of interesting characters who tell stories that add to her understanding of her ancestors and the time period. The real-time chronology of the book helps readers follow the quest, and brings them along on the discovery. Any Other Woman tells a story that is unique and commonplace at the same time. Many readers will likely relate to Kidd's interest in her ancestors, and may even be inspired to learn more about their own genealogy. Yet the story also opens new details about life in the coal mines of Alberta, and early 20th century hardships. It's also a story about following a trail of information, and how a person works to uncover that information, through hard work and good luck. The title of the book comes from a remark by one of Kidd's interview subjects, who says that Rosalia was like any other woman of the time period. The book is sure to resonate with anyone whose ancestors had similar histories. ▼

HOPSCOTCH
SOME CLAIM THE END of the Cold War left certain writers in limbo. le Carré most of all, seeing how the author of *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold* practically made the tangled web of Cold War intelligence his personal literary domain. But the novels that sprung up in the wake of what Francis Fukuyama zealously called the end of history followed their natural patterns, with le Carré turning his attention to multinational corporations, for one, in *The Constant Gardener*. That the war on terror should now loom over *A Most Wanted Man* comes as no surprise, and le Carré responds to its new world order with considerable vigor and insight, recognizing how the West's current bogeyman might be seen as even more ubiquitous and unpredictable than the communists were, thus granting intelligence agencies tacit license to be still more ruthless. In a blackly humorous bit of anti-terror double-think, le Carré has one intelligence official explain to another how a terror suspect is that much more likely to be a jihadi for the very fact that he does not behave like a jihadi. And in a nice tip of the hat to his past work, le Carré sets this new tale in the same country that once marked the Cold War's ideological frontier, and in the very city that was once home to Mohamed Atta. As pessimistic as le Carré can be toward institutions, he remains, like his most notable forbearer Graham Greene, a true believer in individuals. Issa may be to the end a bit of a headache, an enigmatic centerpiece and all-purpose pawn too fanatical for the author to bother peering very deeply into, but le Carré is more than generous in his texturing of both Annabel, who for all her altruistic illusions is not condescended to, and Brue, who seems to be the character closest in spirit—as well as in age—to the author. "A lonely rich man in late life, still looking for the dignity of love" is how Annabel describes Brue, and the description is genuinely tender. It also starts to allude to the fundamental weaknesses of such essentially ordinary characters in the face of unfathomable power—for all our better intentions and beliefs, when our backs are against the wall, most of us simply do what we're told. The world of *A Most Wanted Man*, controlled by the ostensibly diplomatic interests of at least three governments, each having very big fists, is not a forgiving one. It is harsh, and it thinks nothing of consuming lives to forward its goals. Which is to say that, Cold War be damned, this is still the world of spy fiction. "Don't go soft on me," one German operative warns another, "there's no room for it in this operation." "Tell me one where there was," slyly counters the other. There is, of course, no response to be had for that. And that, I'm guessing, is why we keep reading. ▼

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1. Michael Franti & Spearhead – All Rebel Rockers (anti)
2. Ian Tyson – Yellowhead To Yellowstone & Other Love Stories (stony plain)
3. Chad Vangaalen – Soft Airplane (flemish eye)
4. TV On The Radio – Dear Science (touch & go)
5. Rodney Crowell – Sex & Gasoline (stony plain)
6. Kings Of Leon – Only By The Night (rca)
7. Jenny Lewis – Acid Tongue (wamer)
8. Eagles Of Death Metal – Heart On (downtown)
9. Of Montreal – Skeletal Lamping (polyvinyl)
10. Hank 3 – Damn Right, Rebel Proud (sidewalk)
11. Caexico – Carried To Dust (quarter stick)
12. Ryan Adams & The Cardinals – Cardiology (lost highway)
13. Brett Dennen – Hope For The Hopeless (dualtone)
14. Ray La Montagne – Gossip In The Grain (sony/bmg)
15. Old Crow Medicine Show – Tennessee Pusher (nettwerk)
16. Ohgr – Devils On My Details (spv)
17. Okkervil River – The Stand Ins (jagjaguar)
18. Jackson Browne – Time The Conqueror (inside)
19. Tracy Chapman – Our Bright Future (elektra)
20. Dar Williams – Promised Land (razor & tie)
21. Ndidi Onukwulu – The Contradictor (jericho beach)
22. Maria Dunn – The Peddler (distant whisper)
23. Fucked Up – The Chemistry Of Common Life (matador)
24. Wendy McNeill – A Dreamer's Guide To Hardcore Living (six shooter)
25. Taj Mahal – Maestro (heads up)
26. Q-tip – The Renaissance (motonw)
27. Ry Cooder – I, Flathead (nonesuch)
28. Serena Ryder – Is It O.K. (emi)
29. Fleet Foxes – S/T (sub pop)
30. Amos Garrett – Get Way Back (stony plain)

ZAC BROWN BAND

THE FOUNDATION

The Zac Brown Band is an American country music band based in Atlanta, Georgia. The lineup consists of Zac Brown (lead vocals, guitar), Jimmy De Martini (fiddle, vocals), John Driskell Hopkins (bass guitar, vocals), Coy Bowles (guitar, organ), and Chris Fryar (drums). The band has toured throughout the United States, including a slot on the 2006 Bonnaroo Music Festival. They have also recorded four studio albums, and charted one single on the Billboard country charts in the Number One "Chicken Fried".

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DANCE

ALBERTA BALLET - THE NUTCRACKER 11455-87 Ave, 780.428.6839 • Dec 11-14
Auditorium

BOUGE DE LA DANCE COMPANY Dow Centennial Centre, Shell Theatre 8700-84 St, Hwy 21, Fort
Your Hand • Fri, Dec 5, 1pm

BOUGE DE LA DANCE COMPANY Horizon Stage 1001 Calahoo Rd, Spruce Grove, 780.962.8995 • *Like the Five Fingers on Your Hand* • Sat, Dec 6, 2pm • Tickets available at The Horizon Stage box office TicketMaster

CITIE BALLET - PAQUITA VS CARMEN Howard Theatre, Victoria School • Sat, Dec 6, 8pm • \$20 (adult)/\$15 (student/senior/child under 12) at Citie Ballet 780.472.7774, Étoile Dance Shoppe, door

ISIS DANCE - MIDNIGHT AT THE OASIS Place Theatre, 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park • Middle-eastern dance recital • Sun, Dec 7, 7-8pm • Tickets available at The Horizon Stage box office TicketMaster

MICHAEL PLATLEY'S LORD OF THE DANCE Enmax Centrum 4847B-19 St, Red Deer • Tue, Dec 9, 7:30pm • \$58.50-\$65 at TicketMaster

GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS

AGNES GUERRA GALLERY 780.482.2854 • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm; closed Sun-Mon and holidays • *A WINTER'S EVE*: Shortbread, Sherry and Art; Thu, Dec 4, 5-8pm

A.J. OTTEWELL ART CENTRE Boulevard, Sherwood Park, 780.449.4443 • *CHRISTMAS MARKETPLACE*: The Art Society of Strathcona County • 1st week of Dec • Donation for artwork

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL 10186-106 St, 780.488.6611 • **Lower Gallery:** *UP THE CREEK* Ceramics by Brian McArthur, glassworks by Darren J Petersen • Until Dec 20

ALLEN GRAY CONTINUING CARE CENTRE 28 Ave, 780.756.5009 • *BACKYARDS AND OTHER NEIGHBOURHOOD TALES*: Artworks by Gillian Willans and Allen Gray residents

ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA Enterprise Square, 100, 10230 Jasper Ave, 780.422.6223 • Open Mon-Fri 10:30am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-8pm (4-8pm free); Sat-Sun 11am-5pm • *ARENA: The Art of Hockey*; Until Jan 4 • *30 YEARS YOUNG: The Edmonton Oilers 30th Anniversary Showcase* Featuring items from moments in the team's history; until Jan 4 • *IMAGINING SCIENCE*; Until Feb 1 • *IMAGINING SCIENCE IDEA-EXCHANGES*: Dec 4, Dec 11, 7-8pm; free • Free (members); \$10 (adult)/\$7 (senior/student), \$5 (6-12yrs)/free (5yrs and under)/\$20 (family-2 adults, 4 children)

CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA 811 Ave, 780.461.3427 • Group show by artist members; until Dec 2 • *MINIATURES AND MORE*: Miniatures exhibit by George and Judith Kubac; opening reception: Dec 5, 7-8:30pm; Dec 5-20

CROOKED POT GALLERY 4912-51 Ave, Stony Plain, 780.963.9573 • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • Open House in conjunction with Town of Stony Plain's dedication of the centennial mural at 4:00 pm at the guild • Dec 10

DIAMOND DUFF GALLERY 780.488.4445 • Group show • Dec 6-20 • Opening reception: Sat, Dec 6, 2-4pm

FAB GALLERY Room 1-1 Fine Arts Building, U of A, 112 St, 89 Ave, 780.492.2081 • *FROM THE OBSERVATION ROOM*: Amie Rangel (drawing and intermedia) and *A TRANSECT-DUE EAST*: Matthew Rangel (printmaking); until Dec 6 • *WAVE 2008*; Dec 16-23, Jan 6-17; opening reception: Dec 18, 7-10pm

FRINGE GALLERY 10516 Whyte Ave, basement of the Paint Spot, 780.432.0240 • *ABYSS BLISS*. Paintings by Cynthia Fuhrer • Until Dec 30 • Opening reception: Sat, Dec 6, 2-6pm

FRONT GALLERY 12312 Jasper Ave, 780.488.2952 • *A WINTER'S EVE*: Shortbread, Sherry and Art • Thu, Dec 4, 5-8pm

GALLERY IS 4930 Ross St, Red Deer, 403.341.4641 • *3rd Annual Miniatures Exhibit*. Group show; until Dec 31 • Opening: Fri, Dec 5, open until 8pm

GALLERY AT MILNER Stanley A. Milner Library Main Fl, Sir Winston Churchill Square, 780.496.7030 • *DANCING THE MAN RHYTHM*. Paintings by Laurie McFayden, and Catherine Lester • Dec 1-22

HARCOURT HOUSE 3rd Fl, 10215-112 St, 780.426.4180 • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **Main Space:** *PASSAGE*: Installation by Elizabeth Beauchamp and Lynn Malin; until Dec 20 • **Front Room Gallery:** *SOFTLY, SOFTLY: IMAGES OF FEMININITY*. Artworks by Andrea Magnuson; until Dec 20

JOHN ALLEN GALLERY Centre, 10831 University Ave, 780.433.5807 •

CHRISTMAS SHOW AND SALE: Artworks by the artists who exhibited in 2008 • Until Dec 22 • Opening reception: Dec 10, 6:30-8:30pm

KAMENA 5718 Calgary Tr S, 780.944.9497 • Mon-Wed, Fri 10am-6pm; Thu 10am-7pm, Sat 10am-5pm •

LENDRUM POTTERY GROUP Lendrum Community League, 11335-57 Ave • Christmas Sale: Pottery for all occasions and celebrations • Sat, Dec 6, 10am-2pm

LOFT GALLERY A. J. Ottewell Arts Centre, 590 Broadmoor Blvd, Sherwood Park, 780.998-3091 • *MY FAVOURITE THINGS...AND MULTITUDINOUS MINIATURES*: The Art Society of Strathcona County • Until Dec 3

MICHIF CULTURAL AND MÉTIS RESOURCE INSTITUTE • Open: Mon-Fri 9am-4pm; weekends by appt • Aboriginal Veterans Display • Gift Shop • Finger weaving and sash display by Celina Loyer

McMULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St, 780.407.7152 • Open Mon-Fri 10am-8pm; Sat-Sun 1-5pm • *International Visual and Performing Arts Society of Canada* display of artworks • Until Dec 31

MCPAG (Multicultural Centre Public Art Gallery) 5411-51 St, Stony Plain, 780.963.2777 • Open Mon-Sat 10-4pm; Sun 10-6:30pm • Dan Bagan Drawings and paintings • Until Jan 20

MCMULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St, 780.407.7152 • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-8pm; Sat-Sun noon-6pm, evenings/weekends subject to volunteer availability • International Visual Arts: Artworks by members of the International Visual and Performing Arts Society of Canada • Until Dec 31

MUSE HERITAGE MUSEUM • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat-Sun 11am-5pm • *PRINTS FROM CPR MAGIC* • Fraser University Gallery • Until Dec 7

NINA HAGGERTY Stollery Gallery 9704-111 Ave, 780.474.7611 • Open Mon, Wed, Fri 9:30am-2:30pm, Tue, Thu 9:30-4pm, 6:30-8:30pm • NHCA Collective Winter Exhibition and Sale • Until Dec 23

PETER ROBERTSON GALLERY Main Space, 10183-112 St, 780.452.0286 • Open Tue-Sat 11am-5pm • *NOT SO BLACK AND WHITE*: Abstract paintings by Frances Thomas; until Dec 6 • *A WINTER'S EVE*: Shortbread, Sherry and Art; Thu, Dec 4, 5-8pm

PICTURE THIS GALLERY • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • *Picture This Gallery* • Artworks by Brent Heighon, Dean McLeod, Jonn Einerssen, Murray Phillips, Charles H. White, and others • Until Dec 20

PORTAL ART GALLERY 300, 9414-91 St, 780.702-7522 • Artworks by Giselle Denis, Cheri Denis, and Rocco Macri • Until Jan 10

PRINCE'S FURNACE ART GALLERY • Open: Tue-Sat (10am-5pm), Thu (10am-8pm) • *ENCHANTED*. Mindy Andrews, Ilse Anyas-Salkauskas, Susan Greenbank, Liv Pedersen, Pat Strakowski and Pam Weber • Dec 4-23 • Opening reception: Dec 4, 7-9pm

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA 8555 Roper Rd, 780.427.1750 • Open, Tue-Sat 9am-4:30pm, Wed 9am-3pm • *DOCUMENTING ALBERTA*. Photographs of Alberta landscapes from the Public Affairs Bureau • Until Dec 12

ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM • Open daily 9-5pm • *ARTE EN LA CHARRERIA*. Craftsmanship and design distinctive to the Mexican cowboy; Until Apr 13 • *JOSHUA'S JOURNEY*: Joshua Loper's first trail ride on the Chisholm Trail; Until Jan 4 • *ALBERTA COWBOYS IN ART*. Until Jan 4 • *HEIGHTS OF FASHION*: History of the Elevated Foot; until Mar 8 • **Government House**: Tours on Sat, Sun, holidays (11am-4:30pm),

ST. ALBERT ART WALK • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm • Perron, Cargo and James, Concept Jewelry, Crimson Quill Gifts, Gempport, Profiles, St. Thomas Coffee House, Studio Gallery, Wares • Thu, Dec 4, 6-9pm

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St, 780.488.3619 • Open, Tue-Sat (10-5pm) • *CELEBRATING THE SEASON*: Artworks by Brenda Malkinson, Robert Sinclair, Martha Cole, David Mitchell, and Maureen Harvey • Until Dec 24

SPRING OPEN STUDIO • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • Winter open house: Ceramics by Carol and Richard Selfridge • Dec 6-7, 11am-5pm

SHANTI HAIR THERAPY 10407-83 Ave • *NEW SEASONS*. Artworks by Igor Woroniuk • Until Dec 20

SNAP GALLERY 10309-97 St, 780.423.1492 • A Christmas Print Affair: Dec 6-20 • Opening night/fundraiser: Sat, Dec 6, 7-9pm

SPOT LIGHT GALLERY • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • *RESULTS*. Artworks by the Hidden Talent Fine Art Students • Opening reception Dec 6, 1-4pm

SPRUCE GROVE ART GALLERY 420 King St, • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm

TELUS WORLD OF SCIENCE 11211-142 St, 780.452.9100 • *FULL-DOME EXPERIENCE*: until Jan 18 • *THE ART OF THE BRICK™*. Opening Dec 20 • Wild about Alberta's Water; Dec 6-7, 12-4pm

TU GALLERY • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm

Thu 10am-8pm • Artworks by Betty Kovacic • Until Dec 6

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA MUSEUMS GALLERY • TELUS Centre, 87 Ave, 111 St, 780.492.5834 • *BRILLIANT STROKES*: Chinese Paintings from the Mactaggart Art Collection representing the styles in China from 15th to 20th centuries • Until Jan 24

WEST END GALLERY 12308 Jasper Ave, 780.488.4892 • Edmonton Christmas show opens on Dec 4 • *A WINTER'S EVE*: Shortbread, Sherry and Art; Thu, Dec 4, 5-8pm

LITERARY

BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ 9624-76 Ave, 780.469.8755 • *Christmas Carol*, spoken word with John Huston; Dec 4 (6 or 6:30pm seating, 8pm show); \$45 (with dinner)

CITY ARTS CENTRE 10943-84 Ave, 780.932.4409 • T.A.L.E.S. Monthly Storytelling Circle: Tell stories or come to listen; first Thu each month • Until June

STANLEY MILNER LIBRARY • Daily Haiku Journal Launch and Learn-Small Words Big Moments V2 0: haiku reading • *Perfect Gifts*: with Kathy Jessup, Bethany Ellis and Jennie Frost, Dec 4

TALES - THE ALBERTA LEAGUE ENCOURAGING STORYTELLING • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • *TALES: EDMONTON STORYTELLING CAFÉ*: open mic • First Thu each month, 7-9pm • Pay-What-You-Will (min \$6); info at 780.932.4409 • *Perfect Gifts*: with Kathy Jessup, Bethany Ellis and Jennie Frost, Dec 4

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA CAMPUS • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • for Professional Development, 780.492.3662 • Book Launch: Fu-Shiang Chia's readings from his book *Readers perform poetry from Airs of the States* • Sat, Dec 6, 3-5pm

UPPER CRUST CAFÉ 10909-86 Ave, 780.422.8174 • *THE POETS' HAVEN* Monday Night reading series presented by Stroll of Poets • Every Mon, 7pm • \$5 door • Dec 8: featuring Angela Dekort, Cheri Denis Leonard Gierach, Lorraine McFaddin, and Bill Somers

THEATRE

BLACK HEARTS IN THE GREEN ROOM Playhouse, 10322-83 Ave • By Scott Sharplin • Dec 10-20, 8pm; Sun, Mon evening performances; Sun, Dec 14, 2pm • \$12-\$16 at TIX on the Square; Thu, Dec 11: Two-for-One-night

THE BLONDE, THE BRUNETTE AND THE VENERA FROM AD 9828-101A Ave • By Robert Hewett • Until Dec 7 (7:30pm, matinees 1:30pm)

CHAMPION • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • Rapid Fire Theatre presents comedy for the sophisticated; Runs every Sat (11pm) except for the last Sat of each month until mid June 2009

A CHRISTMAS CAROL • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • 9828-101A Ave • Adapted by Tom Wood • Until Dec 23 (7:30pm, 1:30pm mat) • Tickets at the Citadel box office 780.425.1820

BE NASTY • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • 780.433.3399 • Live improvised soap opera • Every Mon, 8pm

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD Westbury Theatre, • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • Fringe Theatre Adventures, Alberta Opera Musical Theatre for Young People • Dec 5-7 • Tickets available at Fringe Theatre box office

PEACE, LOVE AND ROCK 'N' ROLL 2 AND THE BEAT GOES ON Mayfield Dinner Theatre, 16615-109 Ave, 780.483.4051 • Written and compiled by Will Marks • Until Feb 15 • Tickets at Mayfield box office

PIRATES OF THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN - HANGMAN'S CURSE Jubilations Dinner Theatre, 8882-170 St, Phase III, WEM, 780.484-2424 • Oct 31-Feb 1; Wed-Sat, 6:30pm; Sun 5pm

SAILOR'S SONG The Roxy, 10708-124 St, 780.453.2440 • Trunk Theatre/Theatre Network, by John Patrick Shanley • Until Dec 14

SEUSSICAL Arden Theatre, 5 St Anne St, St Albert, 780.459.1542 • St Albert Children's Theatre's musical • Until Dec 7, 2pm • \$22 (adult)/\$16 (child) at Arden box office, 780.459.1558, TicketMaster

THEATLSPORTS • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • 780.448.0695 • Rapid Fire Theatre's weekly improv show • Every Fri, 11pm • Until July 2009

TRAINS FANTÔMES La Cité Francophone, 8627-91 St • L'uni Théâtre • By Mansel Robinson, translated by Jean-Marc Dalpé, produced by Théâtre Triangle Vital de Montréal • Dec 11-13, 8pm; Dec 14, 2pm • \$23 (adult)/\$15 (student/senior) at TIX on the Square, door

THE VIP KID'S SHOW Varscona Theatre 10329-83 St • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • 13 (11am) • \$5 door cash or cheque only • TIX on Square

WITHIN YOU • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • Stage, 87 Ave, 112 St • By Nicole Moeter, Director Bradley Moss • Until Dec 6 (7:30pm, 12:30pm matinees) • \$10-\$20 at TIX on the Square

XMAS IV: THE RE-GIFTING • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-8pm • Sat, Dec 13, 8pm • \$15 (everyone) at door, by

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CLASSIC

JULES AND JIM
DIRECTED BY FRANÇOIS TRUFFAUT
WRITTEN BY JEAN GRUAULT, TRUFFAUT
STARRING JEANNE MOREAU, OSKAR WERNER,
HERIY SEBRE

FLICKS DVDDETECTIVE
BY D. DENRY
by Chris Luckyson

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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Running here and there

mildly funny, mildly scathing
insider's look at Hollywood

—he's an Angelino, visits ex-wives and 1. He's there with agents, actors, editors and studio higher-ups. He exudes a reasonableness with of them that stands out favorably a milieu riddled with tantrums, news and stumbling 12-steppers. He placates, boosts, counsels and consoles and when his back's to the wall, which is often, he makes. He also dyes his chest hair, that hint of desperate inner quirk does in private. He's presumably in 60s but looks pretty good. He in the movies, and for all his calm, he's barely hanging on.

Based on a fairly balls-out memoir of long-term mastication within the capricious dental work of Hollywood, *What Happened* finds prolific producer Linson, aka Ben, embodied by prolific actor Robert De Niro, who, as it happens, starred in numerous Linson-produced projects, including *The Untouchables*, *Heat* and *Great Expectations*. The Sean Penn, who also starred in sev-

COMEDY

WHAT JUST HAPPENED

WRITTEN BY ART LINSON
STARRING ROBERT DE NIRO, ROBIN WRIGHT
PENN, CATHERINE KEENE

eral Linson projects, such as *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, *Casualties of War* and *We're No Angels*, which co-starred De Niro. Penn's spouse, Robin Wright Penn, plays De Niro's ex-spouse and the person he's still closest to. Catherine Keener, who recently starred in Linson's *Into the Wild*, which was directed by Sean Penn, plays De Niro's boss, a woman of such chilling authority she need never raise her voice. Does it go without saying that Linson produced the film, as well as adapted his own book?

There's a long, thick history of self-castigating Hollywood comedies featuring actual Hollywood people playing themselves and intermingling with Hollywood actors playing semi-fictionalized Hollywood people. This strategy supplies *Sunset Boulevard*, to name a particularly sublime example, with some of its richest intertextualities. That term sounds highfalutin', but it

Some of the fun of postmodernism can be when dealing with household name cultural icons. It also speaks to a cultural segment still sufficiently movie-obsessed to happily pass hours playing *Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon*. But is this segment obsessed enough, and large enough, to constitute a substantial audience for *What Just Happened*?

AS DIRECTED BY Barry Levinson—who gave us a far more outrageous self-castigating Hollywood comedy with *Wag the Dog*—the film probably isn't castigating enough, or funny enough, or scandalous enough, to reel in the masses. And it's kind of a shame, because while *What Just Happened* fizzles in its final act, while many of its satirical targets, no doubt based in actual events, finally feel like clichés, it has many nuanced observations, some terribly, amusingly sad scenes of personal meltdown and a very-well-gauged performance from De Niro, who has a knack for playing containment that doesn't just read as mere resignation. His Ben is a welcome twist on the notion of the all-powerful producer. He is a man required to juggle

many balls at once, and who might just care about art, too.

He has a director, played by Toronto-bred Michael Wincott as a manic strung-out Keith Richards wannabe, who won't remove a scene of a dog getting shot in the head from his final cut, despite scathing audience previews. "My wife is still crying, asshole!" reads one of the cards. Another simply reads "FUCK YOU!" He has a rabid actor, Bruce Willis, playing himself, who refuses to shave off a burly beard despite threats by the studio to pull the plug on a picture days

away from production. The beard thing—will Willis shave? will he at least go down to a goatee? a moustache?—is the film's main source of suspense. I guess that might not have you gripping your armrests, yet, you know, there's something sobering, something perversely fascinating, about just how pivotal the presence of the absence of a beard is on the outcome of a multi-million dollar business venture and numer-

WEB EXCLUSIVE
AT VUEWEEKLY
THE INSIDERS
BY BRIAN KESSEL

"Critics and film buffs have been eager to embrace the best of the Hollywood insider pictures, but not the average moviegoer."

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The Reader

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ACUTE, AFFECTING AND SCALDINGLY HONEST.
Director Stephen Daldry mines all the sexual and ethical intensity."

"A SERIOUS CONTENDER FOR
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Stephen Daldry's powerful performance is a masterpiece of emotional impact. The author is superb. I love films of no prior high quality for director Stephen Daldry. I can't wait to see it again.

KATE WINSLET RALPH FIENNES

The Reader

Unlock the mystery.

"A TOTAL TRIUMPH!
BRIMMING WITH HUMOUR AND HEART
IF THERE'S A BETTER MOVIE AROUND
THIS YEAR, I HAVEN'T SEEN IT."
PETER TRAVEL

The New York Times
"THE BEST MAINSTREAM AMERICAN MOVIE
I HAVE SEEN THIS YEAR"
A.O. SGOFF

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PRINCESS THEATRE
10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

THE 400 BLOWS

WHAT JUST HAPPENED
NIGHTLY 8:30 PM
ST. LOUIS MOBILE THEATRE
LTS 400 BLOWS THEATRE

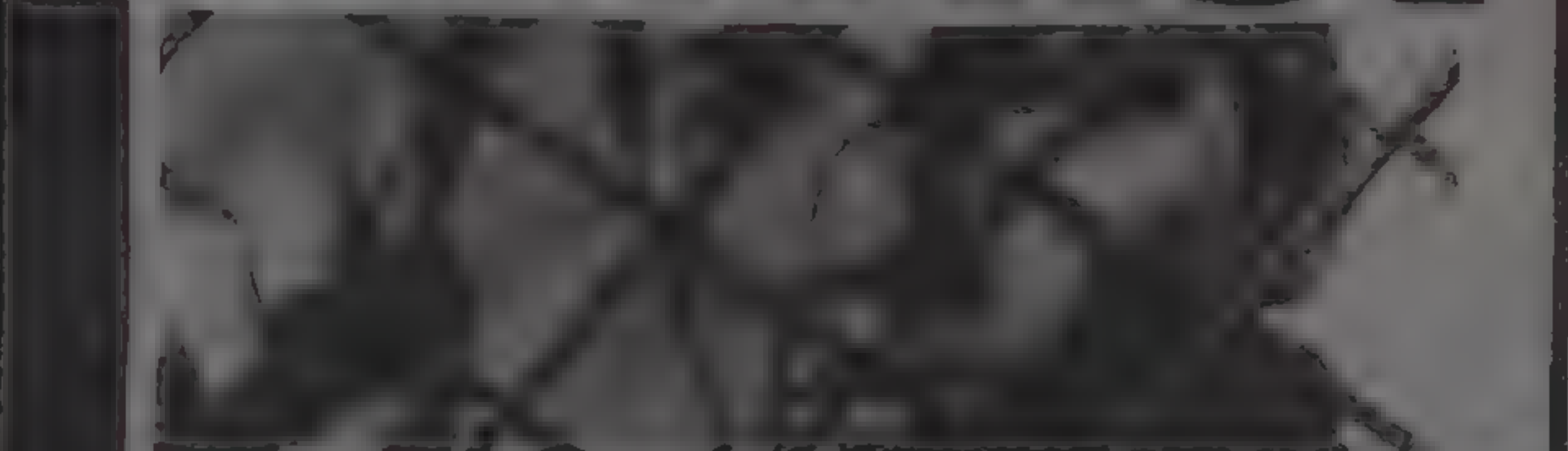
PRINCESS THEATRE
10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

THE 400 BLOWS

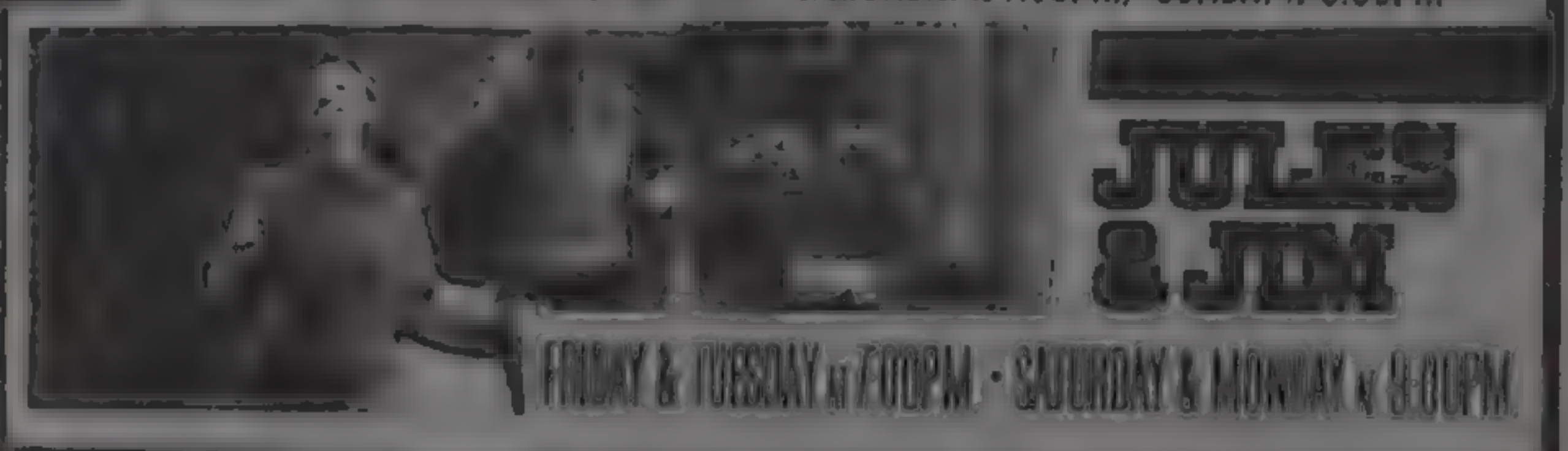
RACHEL GETTING MARRIED
NIGHTLY 8:30 PM
ST. LOUIS MOBILE THEATRE
LTS 400 BLOWS THEATRE

metro CINEMA **DECEMBER 4-9**

TWO BY TRUFFAUT



THE 400 BLOWS
FRIDAY & TUESDAY at 9:00 PM - SATURDAY & MONDAY at 7:00 PM - SUNDAY at 9:30 PM



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DUNK REVIEWS **FILM CAPSULES**

NOW-PLAYING

AUSTRALIA
DIRECTED BY PHILIPIMAN
WRITTEN BY LUHRMANN, OTHERS
STARRING NICOLE KIDMAN, HUGH JACKMAN
★

JONATHAN BUSCH / jonathan@vueweekly.com
Describing it as an historical epic explains very little. As Greg Luhrmann's cinematically over-eager *Australia* veers between attempt at cultural-national redemption and a stupid cartoon come to life in its retelling of the country's WWII-era assimilation of Aborigines. As though cashing in on the maturation of filmmakers like Paul Thomas Anderson, who skillfully adapted his quirky cinematic style to a rigid fraction of the American oil boom in *There Will Be Blood*, Luhrmann apparently thinks a two-and-a-half hour perfume ad can achieve similar results. I don't fucking buy it, and neither should you.

Nicole Kidman stars as Lady Sarah Ashley, or "Missus Boss," as her Aborigine son Nullah (Brandon Walters) calls her, once the wealthy Englishwoman adopts him after a trek across the outback herding cattle with the Drover (Hugh Jackman). After her husband and owner of Australian spread of land Faraway Downs is murdered, Lady

Ashley takes the reins to show who's boss to a money-grubbing old boys club preparing to step in. In *Australia's* first third, Kidman and Jackman make like Crocodile Dundee, where a staunchy priss is liberated as she falls for the affections of mixed-blood ruffian and his boy sidekick. Following such, as Lady Ashley shacks up with her new lover and darling child in a chic, desert-situated ranch-house, until a domestic conflict occurs where Nullah pursues the man-making retreat of a walkabout. His grandfather King George (David Gulpilil) is suddenly framed for Mr Ashley's murder, pulling Nullah away from his family to live with a boat of orphans. Then the Japanese bomb the hell out of them.

If a single accolade can be chucked in *Australia's* direction, it's that it retains the fetishistic old-timeyness of Luhrmann's revered spectacle *Moulin Rouge*—digitized canyons, desert landscapes and starry night sky—despite the sheen of Kidman's skin. While it feels nothing like watching a genuine "old movie," it nonetheless feels like it springs from an imagination inspired by *South Pacific*, *The African Queen* and perhaps *Giant*.

To be fair, Luhrmann fans will no doubt eat the shit up, their emotions swelling enough to burst open a red satin corset. It's not a disappointing departure for Luhrmann to address the conflicted identity of his homeland, considering there's hardly anything poignant about the racial politics he dishes out. Aside from Nullah being torn between his life as a noble savage or obedient son, which is solved by his magical, telepathic rendition of "Over the Rainbow," *Australia* merely portrays caricatures of white folks constantly snubbing the Aborigines with hardly any details of the Policy of Aboriginal Assimilation that the film is supposedly about. The biggest disappointment is that *Australia* is a useless mess—too long and boring for action-adventure, too insipid to be socially relevant, and far too much plot to absorb the sex and glamour.

ON DVD

MIRAGE
DIRECTED BY EDWARD DMYTRYK
WRITTEN BY PETER STRAIN
STARRING GREGORY PECK, DIANE BAKER, WALTER MATTHAU
★★★

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vueweekly.com
When the lights suddenly go out in New York City, David Stillwell (Gregory Peck) begins groping in the dark for answers. The black becomes something almost super-

natural, a catalytic event, afflicted with some sort of amnesia. He beautiful raven-haired stranger (Baker) in a stairwell who says him and then flees when he croate. He descends into subtle floors that later vanish inexpl apartment is weirdly empty, rearranged in his absence. He of things—a man falling to his shadowy figures whispering b tree—that don't add up. His life i ger and he can't remember why, and the strange woman reappears and off comfort: it's precisely his forgett keeping him alive.

Though ostensibly riddled v War paranoia, *Mirage*, dire Edward Dmytryk, is too slight and v lit to be as noir as the set-up promi it is terrific fun, particularly whi ambiguity holds and we know about what the hell is going on a does. This is a movie about a man can't come to terms with the very rece past and turns to others to coax him slowly into it. And you've got to wonder what it is about Peck's handsomely furrowed b that makes him such a perfect, sympan ic embodiment of repressed memory. He was rendered so helpless by amne *Spellbound* that Ingrid Bergman fell with him even when he proved to be a potentially murderous imposter. There was some profound darkness in Peck that through the outer decency he exuded, and beautiful women al seemed willing to shine a light darkness and root around.

The music, by Quincy Jones, is tating, and the bursts of violence silly, which is probably why D cuts to the TV to watch wrestling bit while David is supposed to be arming and knocking out a gun-w heavy. The movie's too long, and the dispatching of clues too piecemeal for a resolution that's inevitably less exciting than what leads to it. But Peter Stone dialogue crackles, Peck and Matthau are a highly enjoyably matched team of would-be sleuths in over their heads. Baker is sexy and mysterious enough in her array of hats, and Dmytryk's unusual use of flashbacks is nicely creepy, fore shadowing stylistic efforts soon to come from the likes of Nicolas Roeg. Overall, *Mirage* is much like the spool little girl that offers David temporary refuge and a cup of invisible coffee there's not much substance there but the presentation is enticing. ▽

GARNEAU theatre
3712 - 106 Street - 433-0728

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FILM AND VIDEO ARTS SOCIETY - ALBERTA

...to be of much use. ...do attempt two ...the real heart of the film ...a Texas motel ...chambermaid Inez ...land, it should ...who wrote this, as ...The Royal Tenen ...for the space ...to play out ...as he tol ...making small ...casual ...*Bottle Rocket* ...later ...and sweet ...small moments, to ...its initial release.

...it's taken, even if, as with ...and *Bottle Rocket*, Wong has ...he gracefully tries ...Still, *Express* starts at a higher ...last work ...led to a ...Clunking ...Cups 223 ...and 663 (Wong ...any Leung Chiu Wai) as each recovers from ...breakup. Cop 223 attempts to ease his ...ken heart by buying tins of pineapple set ...expire one month after the day he was ...mped: if the fruit expires before she calls, ...en so does their love, a situation that ...ads to a few funny but still rending meditations on the nature of expiration. On the ...ght it finally comes to pass, he happens ...on a heroin smuggler whose lost her ...argo, but he's too lovelorn and drunk to see ...er as anything but another chance at love. ...fter they spend a chaste night together ...hat nevertheless gives them both the shot ...the arm they need to suck it up and move ...we switch to 663's story.

Though 223's story is the more stylistically interesting—Wong and cinematographer Christopher Doyle employ a dizzying handheld camera style that frequently turns Hong Kong into a very fitting kind of electric pastel—it's 663's that's the more satisfying, emotionally and intellectually. After his flight attendant girlfriend leaves him, he's noticed by the eccentric counter girl at the food stand (Faye Wong), who slowly begins to infiltrate his life. Though that first just means not-so-chance encounters, it grows to her invading his ...he food stand, though she does little more than clean up and play in his space.

Though Wong is undeniably charming as she spritely dances across the screen, revealing in her crush on a man who's rarely present, it's Leung's turns in the otherwise empty apartment that are the film's real gem. Leung is as good here as anywhere, in particular when he begins talking to various ...to comfort them over ...With Leung as his ...Wong shines, too: he captures a few other filmmakers the utter ...of love, the feeling that some ...and confusing and won ...transpires when the right ...meet and perform what's surely ...clueless mating dance in ...

FILM WEEKLY

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre to confirm

CHABA THEATRE JASPER
6094 Connaught Dr, Jasper, 780 352 4749

TWILIGHT (PG, violence)
Fri-Sat 7:00, 9:10; Sun-Thu 8:00;
CHANGELING (14A)
Fri-Sat 6:50, 9:10; Sun-Thu 8:00

CINEMA AT THE CENTRE
Stanley A. Miller Library Theatre, 7 S
Winston St, Central Square, 780 70 70 70

THE BOTHERSOME MAN (14A,
gory scenes, sexual content)
Wed Dec 10: 6:30; free; Norwegian
with English subtitles

CINEMA CITY MOVIES 12
110 Ave, 780 415 0150

**THE HAUNTING OF MOLLY
HARTLEY** (14A)
Fri-Sat 1:20, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45;
Sun-Thu 1:55, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45

PRIDE AND GLORY
(14A, coarse language, violence,
not recommended for children)
Daily 1:15, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40

MAX PAYNE (14A, violence)
Fri-Sat 1:55, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45,
12:00; Sun-Thu 1:55, 4:45, 7:15,
9:45

QUARANTINE (18A, gory
scenes)
Fri-Sat 7:30, 10:05, 12:05, Sun-
Thu 7:30, 10:05

BODY OF LIES (14A, coarse lan-
guage, brutal violence)
Fri-Sat 1:20, 4:10, 6:55, 9:35,
12:10; Sun-Thu 1:20, 4:10, 6:55,
9:35

APPALOOSA (14A)
Fri-Sat 1:25, 4:05, 6:45, 9:20,
11:50; Sun-Thu 1:25, 4:05, 6:45,
9:20

ROCK N ROLLA (14A, coarse
language, violence)
Fri-Sat 1:25, 4:35, 7:10, 9:50,
12:05; Sun-Thu 1:25, 4:35, 7:10,
9:50

**NICK AND NORAH'S INFINITE
PLAYLIST** (PG, coarse language)
Fri-Sat 9:25, 11:45; Sun-Thu 9:25
IGOR (PG)
Daily 1:50, 4:05

LAKEVIEW TERRACE (14A,
coarse language)
Fri-Sat 1:55, 4:40, 7:20, 9:55,
12:15; Sun-Thu 1:55, 4:40, 7:20,
9:55

BURN AFTER READING (14A,
violence, coarse language)
Fri-Sat 1:30, 4:25, 7:15, 9:30,
11:40; Sun-Thu 1:30, 4:25, 7:15,
9:30

THE DARK KNIGHT (PG, vio-
lence, frightening scenes, not rec-
ommended for young children)
Fri-Sat 1:10, 4:20, 7:40, 11:20;
Sun-Thu 1:10, 4:20, 7:40

MAMMA MIA! (PG)
Fri-Sat 1:40, 4:15, 7:05, 9:35,
11:55; Sun-Thu 1:40, 4:15, 7:05,
9:35

WALL-E (G)
Daily 1:30, 4:30, 7:00

CINEPLEX ODEON NORTH
14231 14th Ave, 780 732 22 40

PUNISHER: WAR ZONE (18A,
gory scenes, brutal violence)
Fri-Sat 1:20, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45;
Sun-Thu 1:55, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (14A)
Daily 12:15, 1:10, 2:40, 3:50,
5:15, 6:50, 7:50, 9:30, 10:30

**MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2
AFRICA** (G)
Daily 12:10, 1:00, 3:10, 5:30,
7:40, 9:50

ROLE MODELS (14A, crude con-
tent, coarse language)
Fri-Mon, Wed-Thu 1:50, 4:40,
7:10, 9:40; Tue 4:40, 7:10, 9:40;
Tue 1:00

**ZACK AND MIRI MAKE A
PORN** (18A, sexual content,
coarse language, crude content)
Daily 4:10, 10:15

CHANGELING (14A)
Fri-Wed 12:50, 7:00; Thu 12:50

BOLT (G)

Fri-Mon, Wed-Thu 12:00, 2:15,
4:30, 6:45; Tue 4:30, 6:45; Daily
12:40, 2:50, 5:20, 7:45, 10:10;
Tue 1:00

TWILIGHT (PG, violence)
Daily 12:30, 1:30, 3:30, 4:20,
6:30, 7:20, 9:20, 10:20

FOUR CHRISTMASSES (PG,
crude content, language may
offend)
No passes Daily 12:20, 1:40,
3:00, 4:00, 5:10, 6:40, 7:30, 9:10,
10:05

AUSTRALIA (PG, violence, lan-
guage may offend)
No passes Daily 2:30, 6:20, 9:00,
10:00

TRANSPORTER 3 (14A)
Daily 2:00, 4:50, 7:55, 10:35

CINEPLEX ODEON SOUTH
110 Ave, 780 415 0150

PUNISHER: WAR ZONE (18A,
gory scenes, brutal violence)
Daily 12:20, 3:20, 6:30, 9:30

SHAKA DE FIATTE
(In Punjabi, STC)
Daily 1:00, 5:00, 9:20

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (14A)
Daily 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 7:10,
10:00, 10:05

**MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2
AFRICA** (G)
Fri-Mon, Wed-Thu 11:50, 1:40,
2:20, 4:10, 4:30, 6:45, 9:15; Tue
11:50, 2:20, 4:10, 4:30, 6:45,
9:15; Tue 1:00

ROLE MODELS (14A, crude con-
tent, coarse language)
Daily 1:45, 4:45, 7:45, 10:15

**ZACK AND MIRI MAKE A
PORN** (18A, sexual content,
coarse language, crude content)
Daily 1:30, 4:45, 7:45, 10:20

CHANGELING (14A)
Fri, Sun-Thu 12:40, 3:45, 6:50,
10:15; Sat 3:45, 6:50, 10:15

BOLT (G)
Daily 1:20, 3:50; Daily 12:00,
2:30, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50

TWILIGHT (PG, violence)
Daily 12:30, 1:15, 3:30, 4:40,
6:40, 7:30, 9:50, 10:30

FOUR CHRISTMASSES (PG,
crude content, language may
offend)
No passes Fri-Mon, Wed-Thu
12:10, 12:50, 2:40, 3:40, 5:00,
6:50, 7:50, 9:40, 10:30; Tue
12:10, 2:40, 3:40, 5:00, 6:50,
7:50, 9:40, 10:30; Tue 1:00

AUSTRALIA (PG, violence, lan-
guage may offend)
No passes Daily 2:00, 6:30, 8:00,
10:00

TRANSPORTER 3 (14A)
Daily 1:10, 4:20, 7:15, 10:10

CITY CENTRE 8
10200-102 Ave, 780 421-7020

TWILIGHT (PG, violence)
Dolby Stereo Digital Daily 12:40,
3:35, 6:30, 9:10

BOLT IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D
(G)
Digital presentation, RealD 3d
Daily 12:45, 3:25, 7:00, 9:15

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (14A)
Dolby Stereo Digital
Daily 12:50, 3:20, 6:40, 9:20

AUSTRALIA (PG, violence, lan-
guage may offend,
No passes,
Dolby Stereo Digital
Daily 12:50, 3:25, 7:00, 9:15

FOUR CHRISTMASSES (PG,
crude content, language may
offend)
DTS Digital
Fri-Tue, Thu 12:55, 3:15, 6:50,
9:30; Sat-Sun 1:05, 3:15, 6:50,
9:30

TRANSPORTER 3 (14A)
Fri, Sun, Tue-Thu 1:10, 3:50,
6:35, 9:00; Sat, Mon 7:00, 9:20

**THE ADVENTURES OF
PINOCCHIO** (Classification not
available)
Digital Presentation
Sat-Sun 1:00

PUNISHER: WAR ZONE (18A,
gory scenes, brutal violence)
DTS Digital
Daily 1:00, 3:45, 6:45, 9:30

CLAYTON K
4211-139 Ave, 780 472-7500

**MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2
AFRICA**
Fri, Mon-Thu 4:15, 6:40, 8:50;
Sat-Sun 2:00, 4:15, 6:40, 8:50

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (14A)
Fri, Mon-Thu 4:10, 6:50, 9:30;
Sat-Sun 1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30

BOLT IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D
(G)
Digital Presentation Fri, Mon-Thu
4:40, 7:05, 9:20; Sat-Sun 2:10,
4:40, 7:05, 9:20

TWILIGHT (PG, violence)
Fri, Mon-Thu 3:50, 4:20, 6:30,
7:00, 9:10, 9:35; Sat-Sun 1:10,
1:40, 3:50, 4:20, 6:30, 7:00, 9:10,
9:35

FOUR CHRISTMASSES (PG,
crude content, language may
offend)
Fri, Mon-Thu 4:00, 4:50, 6:45,
7:20, 9:00, 9:50; Sat-Sun 1:20,
2:20, 4:00, 4:50, 6:45, 7:20, 9:00,
9:50

AUSTRALIA (PG, violence, lan-
guage may offend)
No passes Fri 4:30, 8:00; Sat-Sun
1:00, 4:30, 8:00; Mon-Thu 4:30,
8:00

TRANSPORTER 3 (14A)
Fri, Mon-Thu 4:45, 7:15, 9:40,
Sat-Sun 1:50, 4:45, 7:15, 9:40

PUNISHER: WAR ZONE (18A,
gory scenes, brutal violence)
Fri, Mon-Thu 4:25, 7:10, 9:45;
Sat-Sun 1:25, 4:25, 7:10, 9:45

DOUGAN CINEMA-CAMROSE
10000-100 Ave, 780 415 0150

AUSTRALIA (PG, violence, lan-
guage may offend)
Daily 7:30; Sat-Sun 1:45

FOUR CHRISTMASSES (PG,
crude content, language may
offend)
Daily 7:20, 9:20; Sat-Sun 2:20

TWILIGHT (PG, violence)
Daily 6:55, 9:15

BOLT (G)
Daily 7:00, 9:00; Sat-Sun 2:00

**MADAGASCAR 2: ESCAPE 2
AFRICA** (G)
Sat-Sun 2:15

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (14A)
Daily 7:05, 9:05; Sat-Sun 2:05

GALAXY-SHERWOOD PARK
2920 Sherwood Drive, 780 415 0150

PUNISHER: WAR ZONE (18A,
gory scenes, brutal violence)
Fri 3:45, 7:20, 10:00; Sat-Sun
12:40, 3:45, 7:20, 10:00; Mon-
Thu 7:20, 10:00

BOLT (G)
Fri 4:00, 7:05, 9:40; Sat-Sun
1:30, 4:00, 7:05, 9:40; Mon-Thu
7:05, 9:40

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (14A)
Fri 3:50, 4:20, 7:00, 9:30, 10:15;
Sat-Sun 12:30, 3:50, 4:20, 7:00,
9:30, 10:15; Mon-Thu 7:00, 9:30,
10:15

**MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2
AFRICA** (G)
Fri 4:10, 6:40, 9:20; Sat-Sun
12:50, 4:10, 6:40, 9:20; Mon-Thu
6:40, 9:20

ROLE MODELS (14A, crude con-
tent, coarse language)
Fri 3:40, 6:30, 9:10; Sat-Sun
12:10, 3:40, 6:30, 9:10; Mon-Thu
6:30, 9:10

FOUR CHRISTMASSES (PG,
crude content, language may
offend)
No passes
Fri 4:15, 7:40, 10:10, Sat-Sun
1:20, 4:15, 7:40, 10:10; Mon-Thu
7:40, 10:10

AUSTRALIA (PG, violence, lan-
guage may offend)
Fri 3:30, 8:00; Sat-Sun 12:00,
3:30, 8:00; Mon-Thu 8:00

TRANSPORTER 3 (14A)
Fri 4:30, 7:10, 9:50; Sat-Sun
1:00, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50; Mon-Thu
7:10, 9:50

TWILIGHT (PG, violence)
Fri 4:40, 6:50, 7:30, 10:20; Sat-
Sun 12:20, 1:10, 4:40, 6:50, 7:30,
10:20; Mon-Thu 6:50, 7:30, 10:20

CARNEAU
8712-109 St, 780 433-0728

**THE BOY IN THE STRIPED
PAJAMAS** (PG, mature themes,
disturbing content)
Daily 7:00, 9:00; Sat-Sun 2:00

GRANDIN THEATRE
Grandin Mall, Sir Winston Churchill Ave, St
Winston, 780 433-0728

BOLT (G)
Daily 1:00, 3:05, 5:00, 6:55, 8:50

TWILIGHT (PG)
Daily 1:30, 4:15, 6:45, 9:10

FOUR CHRISTMASSES (PG,
crude content, language may
offend)
No passes Daily 12:30, 2:15,
4:05, 5:55, 7:45, 9:35

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (14A)
Daily 1:15, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20

MADAGASCAR 2 (G)
Daily 12:55, 2:55, 4:40, 6:30

CHANGELING (14A)
Daily 8:20

LEBOC CINEMAS
10000-100 Ave, 780 415 0150

Date of issue only: Friday,
December 4th

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (14A)
Daily 7:10, 9:35; Sat-Sun 1:10,
3:35

AUSTRALIA (PG, violence, lan-
guage may offend)
Daily 6:30, 9:25; Sat-Sun 12:30,
3:25

TWILIGHT (PG, violence)
Daily 6:55, 9:30; Sat-Sun 12:55,
3:30

BOLT (G)
Daily 7:00, 9:20; Sat-Sun 1:00,
3:20

METRO CINEMA
9828-101A Ave, Citadel Theatre,
780 433-0728

JULES ET JIM (PG)
Fri, Tue 7:00,
Sat, Mon 9:00

ICE (STC)
Sun 7:00

THE 400 BLOWS (PG)
Fri, Tue 9:00,
Sat, Mon 7:00; Sun 9:30

THE GATES (STC)
Thu 7:00, 9:00

BARCLAY CINEMA
130 Century Crossing, Spruce Grove, 780-
972-2332, Serving Spruce Grove, Stony
Mountain, and surrounding areas

AUSTRALIA (PG, violence, lan-
guage may offend)
Daily 7:30;
Sat, Sun, Tue 1:30

FOUR CHRISTMASSES (PG,
crude content, language may
offend)
Daily 6:50, 9:10,
Sat, Sun, Tue 12:45, 3:05

TRANSPORTER 3 (14A)
Daily 7:10, 9:25,
Sat, Sun, Tue 1:10, 3:20

BOLT (G)
Daily 7:00, 9:05;
Sat, Sun, Tue 1:00, 3:00

TWILIGHT (PG, violence)
Daily 6:45, 9:20;
Sat, Sun, Tue 12:55, 3:30

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (14A)
Daily 7:05, 9:30,
Sat, Sun, Tue 12:50, 3:10

**MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2
AFRICA** (G)
Daily 6:55, 9:00;
Sat, Sun, Tue 1:05, 3:10

PRINCESS
10337-82 Ave, 780 433-0728

RACHEL GETTING MARRIED
(14A, coarse language, mature
themes)
Daily 9:15; Sat-Sun 3:30

TELL NO ONE (14A violence,
coarse language, nudity)
Daily 6:45; Sat-Sun 1:00

WHAT JUST HAPPENED (14A,
coarse language)
Daily 6:50, 9:00;
Sat-Sun 2:00

SCOTIABANK THEATRE WEST
111 Ave, Great Rd, 780 455-8726

PUNISHER: WAR ZONE (18A,
gory scenes, brutal violence)
Daily 12:40, 3:50, 7:10, 10:00

**THE METROPOLITAN OPERA:
DOCTOR ATOMIC ENCORE**
(Classification not available)
Sat 11:00

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (14A)
Daily 6:45, 9:45;
Daily 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

**MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2
AFRICA** (G)
Daily 1:00, 4:00

ROLE MODELS (14A, crude con-
tent, coarse language)
Fri, Sun-Thu 12:50, 4:20, 6:50,
9:50;
Sat 4:20, 6:50, 9:50

**MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2
AFRICA: THE IMAX
EXPERIENCE** (G)
Fri-Wed 12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:00,
9:20;
Thu 12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 9:45

**ZACK AND MIRI MAKE A
PORN** (18A, sexual content,
coarse language, crude content)
Fr-Wed 1:50, 5:00, 7:50, 10:30;
Thu 1:50, 10:30

BOLT (G)
Fri-Tue, Thu 12:00, 2:30, 4:50,
7:20, 9:40;
Wed 4:50, 7:20, 9:40; Wed 1:00

TWILIGHT (PG, violence)
Daily 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 10:15,
Daily 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30

FOUR CHRISTMASSES (PG,
crude content, language may
offend)
No passes
Daily 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 10:15,
Daily 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30

WED 12:10, 2:40, 4:40, 9:45

WED 6:40, 7:40, 10:40

WED 1:00

AUSTRALIA (PG, violence, lan-
guage may offend)
No passes
Daily 12:20, 4:10, 8:00

TRANSPORTER 3 (14A)
Daily 1:40, 4:45, 7:

Sylvester's approach has varied from tying together old family photographs with an illustrated bill for Five Dollar Bill to building a set in photographer Dustin Delfs' studio for *Hair in My Eyes Like a Highland Steer* to manipulated old Civil War prints for Lund's latest, *Horse Soldier! Horse Soldier!*

"Those were taken from an old Civil War book," he recalls. "We really wanted to maintain the etching look. I wouldn't even be able to recreate something that authentic, and that's where a designer has to decide, 'Do I illustrate this, do I purchase illustrations, do I get somebody else to illustrate or photograph the image?' You have to make those decisions about whatever is going to work best. There's a time constraint as well—I wouldn't have been able to illustrate



the Famines: for the first eight months of the band's life, rather than taking to the city's stages Biesinger worked at

lous posturing that is found in so many band press photos.

"Both Garrett and I are very concerned about how a lot of band promo photos basically look like they're pants

sub-Sahara Africa. It's fantastic surrogates that have purpose and also just to remove us from that of youth and superficial style."

When it comes to design, Biesinger says that he tends to take a different approach whether he's working on an album cover or a gig poster, explaining that posters tend to be ephemeral, appearing very quickly, whereas album covers are designed to last. "It's a strategy that is necessary with a poster meant to intrigue people enough to get them out to a show

BARRY AMENT OF THE BROTHERS
the luxury of treating posters as individual works of art that have life far beyond a typical gig poster. Biesinger and his partner Coby Schultze have designed some of the duo's designs with friends—

been designing posters for Jam since 1995. For many years, the Brothers designed a poster for the band's concert. Growing up in

tana, Ament says that there were a whole lot of bands playing there and was often left with the record and

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuwweekly.com

It's just about the music. We can say it—and both musicians and listeners do—but it's just not true. The second someone picks up an acoustic guitar and starts strumming it, there's a visual side to the music that's being produced. From there, we quickly get into album artwork, gig posters and photography—both live and in the studio—and music becomes a medium that is inextricably tied with the visuals that accompany it.

Jeff Sylvester of Pilot Design has had a hand in pulling together the visual identities of a number of Edmonton-based musicians, design albums for the likes of Ann Vriend, Robin Hunter and Corb Lund. Sylvester admits that the artwork is often the initial point of entry when it comes to music.

"I'm always judging books by their cover and it goes the same way for album covers," he says. "Part of my personality relies on visual identity and identifying things visually, and that will sway my decision a lot of the time."

When it comes to album design, Sylvester explains that his credit in the liner notes can involve a variety of things, but it basically means that he's involved in the design from the ground up.

In the case of his work with Lund,

More than meets the ear

LIGHTS AND SOUNDS COLLIDE WHEN IT COMES TO MUSIC

all of those within the budget. "I always give it a good listen to before I start," he notes. "And my impression of the music, of course, is going to be different from his, or any other musician. It's their baby. So I'm going to interpret their songs in a different way. It sometimes plays a part in the artwork. If anything it creates a mood that directs a certain style, but it definitely helps."

LOCAL ILLUSTRATOR / musician Raymond Biesinger agrees that sound and visuals are very much related; the connection has always been there for Biesinger, but it's integral to his work with his current duo with drummer Garrett Heath Kruger,

developing the band's graphic image in conjunction with—and as an essential extension of—the music

"I almost feel the truest expression of my visual style and the ideal of it is when I'm making work related to the band," he admits. "It just adopts this more improvised and chaotic thing that the Famines do as well

"I suppose that the link doesn't stop there either—I mean there's the visual and the audio, and I feel that there's this living ethics that goes along with it in my case," he continues. "I like to live very simply and keep things as simple as possible, and that's the same as it is with the Famines and that's the same as it is when my work is idealized through visual work for the Famines."

Part of the Famines' visual side has actually been to disconnect the group from what Biesinger sees as a cult of youth that surrounds the music industry and which rears its head in the ridicu-

commercials—like jeans—and that disgusts me," he scoffs. "So we've decided that we're not ever going to be personally portrayed in anything, and we know that because of a number of conventions of the music industry you need to have portraits, so we've appointed surrogates.

"Garrett is represented by Charles Bronson and I am represented by a portrait of Steven Lewis," Biesinger explains of the duo's stand-ins. "And I think that those two people are very representative of what we do as a band—there's a certain energy to it and true actualization of music that Charles Bronson represents, and everything that we write is with a real purpose and has a certain activist purpose as well. And Steven Lewis is one of the people I respect most in the world—he's the anti-AIDS activist who focuses in





album artwork. That combination contributed to his outlook on sights and sounds, as well as the fact that, for him, the actual process of going to a record store and buying a physical album, was just as much a part of the experience as putting the music on and listening

Today, while downloading has all but killed the album art for many people, Ament says that there is a large group of fans who approach Pearl Jam's tour posters from the same viewpoint

I think for a lot of people now, because we've been doing it for a while it's a part of the evening," he says. "People are going to see the music, but they're also going to get the poster, so it's become a part of the whole event.

"It's not an advertisement," he adds, noting that the posters that Ames Bros create for Pearl Jam are more merchandise than something that is meant to summon an audience. "You still have to make it appealing, but it doesn't have to translate when somebody is driving by in a car, so I think we have a little bit more flexibility and can experiment a little bit more because of that, because it doesn't have to be a quick read and have an immediate impact. Things can be a little bit more subtle and maybe more thought provoking."

The popularity of Pearl Jam's tour posters has generated an increase in the beginning they were simply special souvenirs that a couple hundred people would pick up at a show, but these days someone will snap a photo on an iPhone, post it to the web and suddenly there are

10-page discussions of the image on

Not that it's necessarily a bad thing, though. Ament is glad that people are interested enough to talk about the images, and the posters allow the Ames Bros to present their own viewpoints on certain topics.

"We always have to think of the band and it helps when we're on the same page as the band on certain issues, be it 2000 through 2008, when the Bush administration was taking care of things, the band was making certain statements and it allowed us, sharing the same point of view of where we were at and where the administration was leading us and the potential war, [to have] an outlet. At the very least you could speak out a little bit."

THE THING ABOUT capturing a visual side of a band is that someone who demonstrates impressive talent with music might not have an equal visual sense. For that reason, it's important that there be a strong entity involved in the images. That doesn't mean that the musicians should have no say in the matter—just that there needs to be someone, be it the band or another designer, who approaches the album art, poster or photographs from a point of view that considers what will work best

And that's where photographer Neil Zlozower comes in for many bands. Zlozower has been shooting bands for nearly four decades in just about every situation imaginable. These

days he's most happy working in his studio, but he's done his time shooting live perform

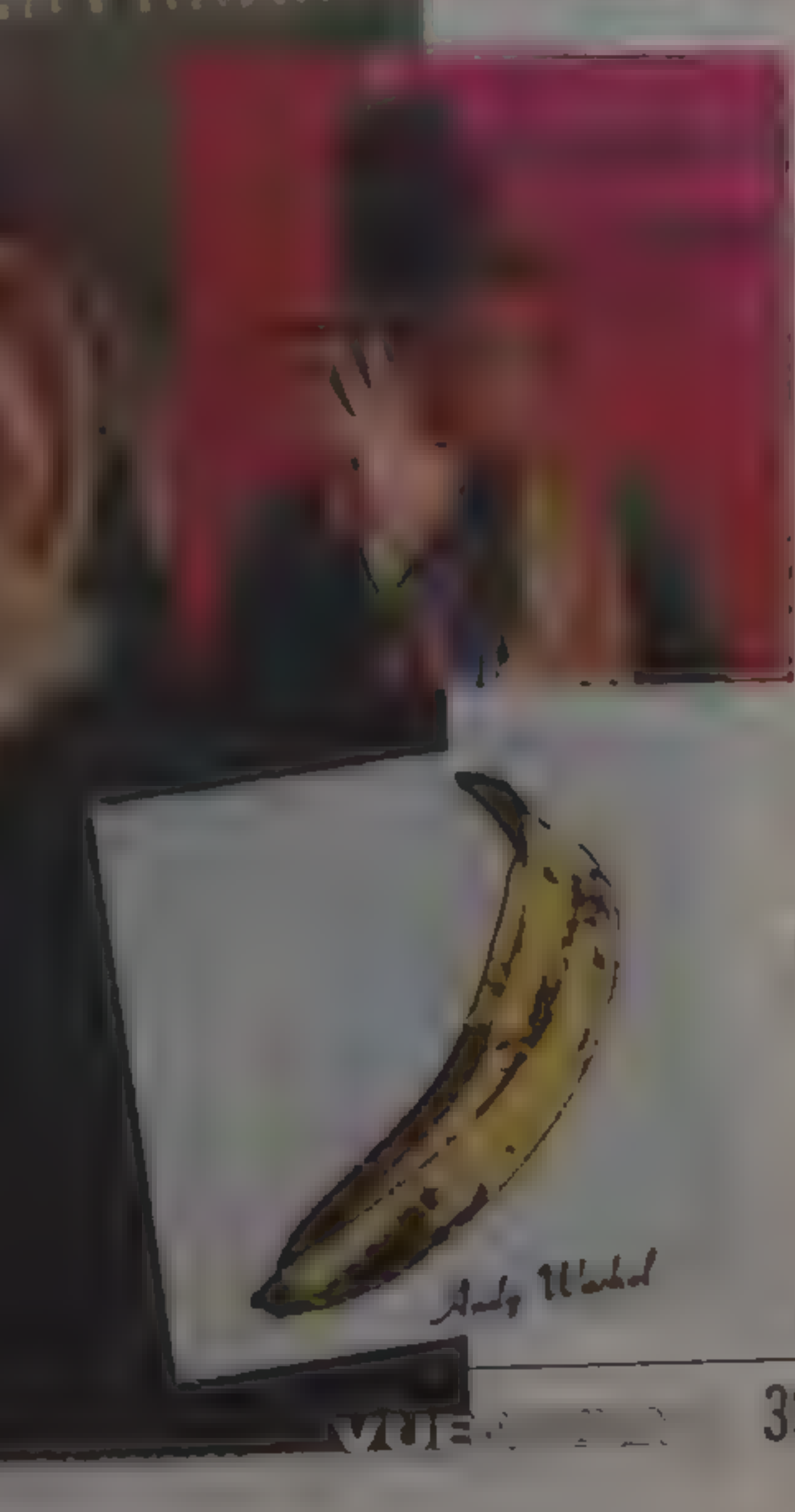
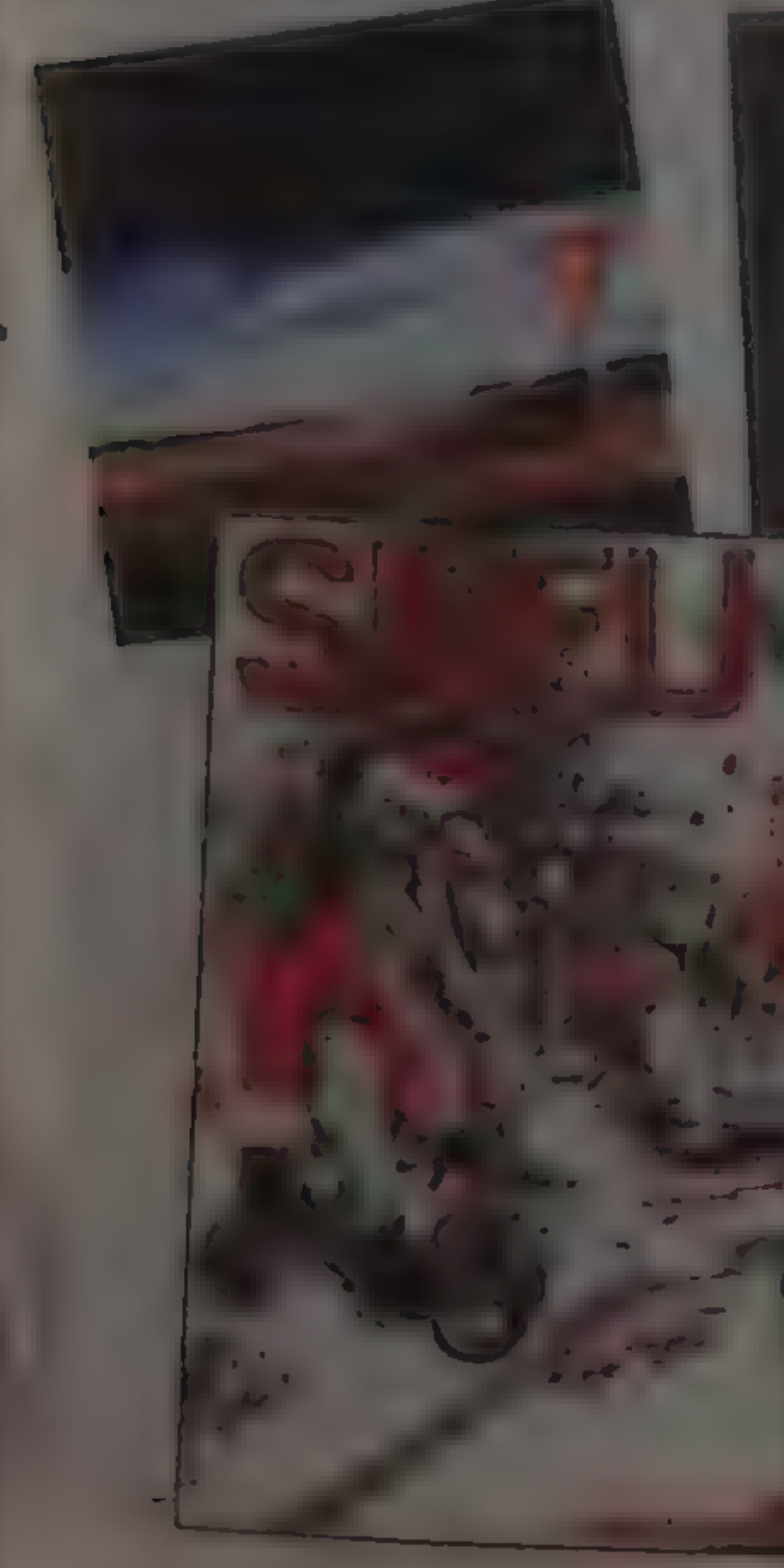
"A live shot you have no control—you're in a pit, most photographers get three songs," he states. "When I'm shooting in my studio I have total control, so I call the shots. I can use whatever lighting I want—ring lights, soft box, umbrellas, straight on strobe lighting, whatever. If you go and shoot live you're at the mercy of the lighting director or you're at the mercy of the height of the stage or most people are at the mercy of getting three songs."

While Zlozower's list of subjects is made up of some of the biggest names to grace the pages of any number of rock magazines—and he took many of those photos himself—the chart or financial success of the musicians doesn't always correspond with their ability to take good photos

"Musicians are musicians," Zlozower states matter of factly. "They aren't models. Models know how to pose, models know what positions look good, they know what to do with their face, their arms, their bodies to look good. Musicians just sort of stand there and shrug their shoulders like 'OK, what do you want me to do now.'"

"As you can probably tell, I've got a big mouth," he adds. "Some photographers are sort of intimidated by shooting 'celebrity / rock 'n' roll personalities'—I've been doing this for 39 years now, so nothing scares me

I'm constantly trying to squeeze out every bit of emotion and attitude. In the '80s when we were doing the hair bands and everybody wanted to be a 'rock star' I'd have a speech. It would be, 'OK, guys, you're playing two sold-out shows at the Forum tonight, your record just went quadruple platinum, you've got 20 chicks in the front row that want to come back to the hotel room and suck your dick—give me some fucking rock god attitude.' That was in the '80s. Now I'm 54 years old, I'm in my golden years so I'm more mellow now, but I still, whoever I'm shooting, try to pull everything out of my subjects that I can."



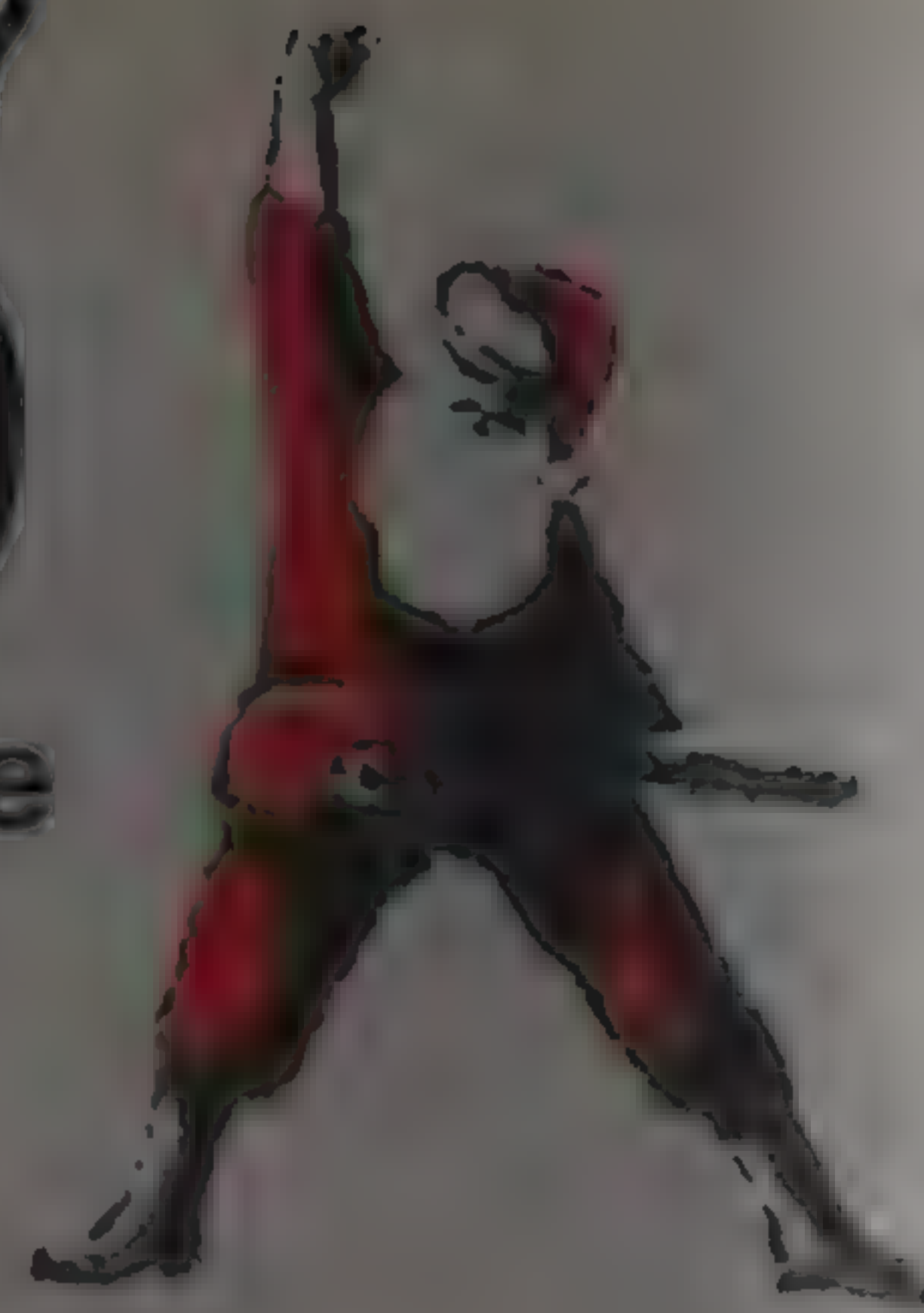
VUEWEEKLY PRESENTS



NEXT WEEK!
NEW YEAR'S EVE STYLES

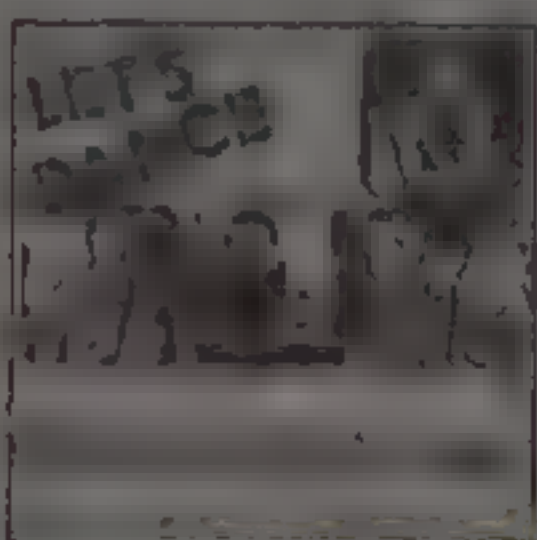
THE MOST
COMPREHENSIVE
LISTING OF
NEW YEAR'S EVE

VUEWEEKLY CD Gift guide



Wow, Christmas again already, huh? Despite a chorus of continuing cries heralding the death of the music industry, there are still plenty of albums out there, and there's nothing like wrapping one or two of them up for the music fan in your life. Of course, DVDs are big these days, and there are no doubt some of you who are looking to give a little music-making technology to a loved one, so we've included a few suggestions for you as well in our holiday gift guide. And if none of these seem just right, you can find more suggestions online at vueweekly.com

Sweet melodies made right here at home



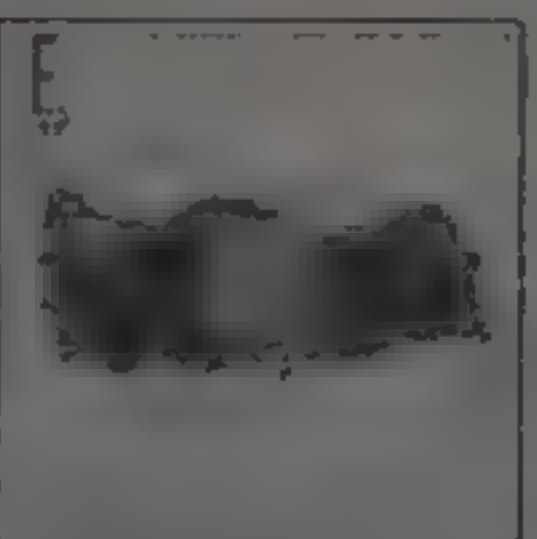
Let's Dance, Crazy/Sweet Kiss (Longshot) Even better than their first seven-inch, Let's Dance's newest is not only two great songs by them, but it's a split with

Does someone on your list have spiky hair and a bad attitude? Here's a good way to get through to them

40 Thieves, 40 Thieves (Independent) OK, it comes out just in time for Christmas, so you can be almost sure whoever you're buying for doesn't already have it. Filled with bass heavy dub step anthems about having fun, the new 40 Thieves record is an easy choice.

The City Streets, Concentrated Living (Paperbird) The new City Streets is the perfect record for long winter nights filled with whisky and cigarettes, and whatever other terrible things you're putting into your body to get through this tough slog.

Cadence Weapon, Afterparty Babies (Upper Class) Buy the vinyl to better see all the people you know on the front cover



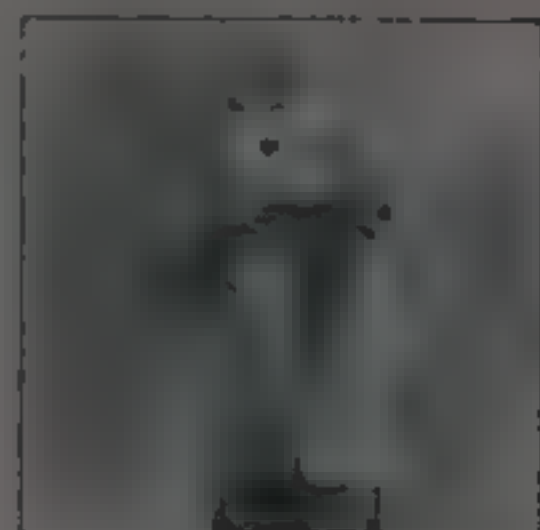
The Famines, 2 x 7" (Independent) With packaging worth framing—purchase the accompanying book for extra Christmas points—the Famines have crafted two seven-inch singles of

material that sounds like what would happen if you fell into quicksand after taking amphetamines. —**BRYAN BIRTLES** / bryan@vueweekly.com

Hip-hop wonders to warm the spirit

Common, Universal Mind Control (Geffen) Common steps away from his heartbroken regular producer to the bosom of the Neptunes for his latest. The robo-funk single "UMC" has been around months, and if the album, which drops next week, is half as fun, it's well worth checking out

Jake One, With the Words (Rhymesayers) Seattle producer extraordinaire Jake One calls on old pals MF Doom, Pharoahe Monch, Slug and a host of others for his debut full-length. Jake's at the top of his game—as he'll often tell you—with a disc that ranges from '70s noir to boom-bap jazz.



Q-Tip, The Renaissance (Uni-Motown) It's been a while since Tip did anything but a guest appearance, but the wait's worth it. As strong as he's ever been, the best Tribe Called Quest MC drops

an album of dreamy, smooth funk anchored by his inimitable flow, proving sometimes there's nothing like some experience in the rap game.

The Mighty Underdogs, Droppin' Science Fiction (Def Jux) Quannum all-stars Gift of Gab and Later... the Truth Speaker combine with Crown City Rockers producer Headnodic for an album of West Coast backpacker hip hop that goes down so smooth they should name a whisky after it

MURS, Murs for President (Warner Bros) The indie hero finally steps up on to a major label, and doesn't disappoint. As usual, it's all about his flow: few rappers in the game can do the day-to-day, just-getting-by style that he's perfected. —**DAVID BERRY** / david@vueweekly.com

Sounds from and inspired by the Island



The Slackers, Self Medication (Indication) Nearing the 20 year mark as a group, the Slackers maintains its integrity as one of the finest ska bands the world has ever heard. The players have

perfected their laidback style and sensible lyrics. *Self Medication* is essential for any fan of the genre who appreciates it being played to the utmost quality

Sub City Dwellers, When the Beat Starts to Pound (Longshot) This eight-piece Winnipeg band has redefined the contemporary ska sound, bringing it on with polished rhythm and horn sections. The group's highly danceable sound is a blend of genres ranging from punk to Latin. The live show must never be passed up, but until the next one, this album is essential for the ska freak on your list

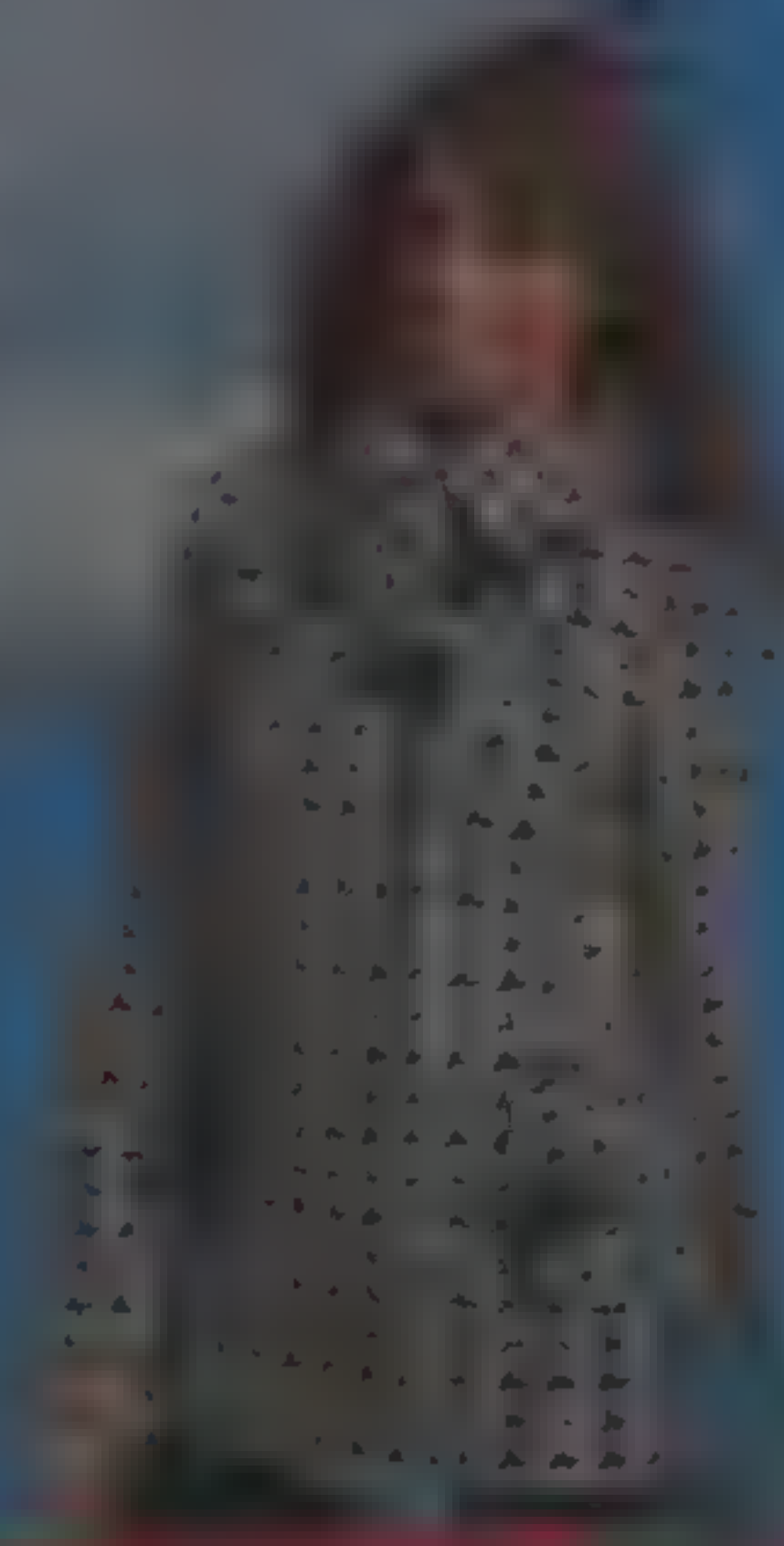
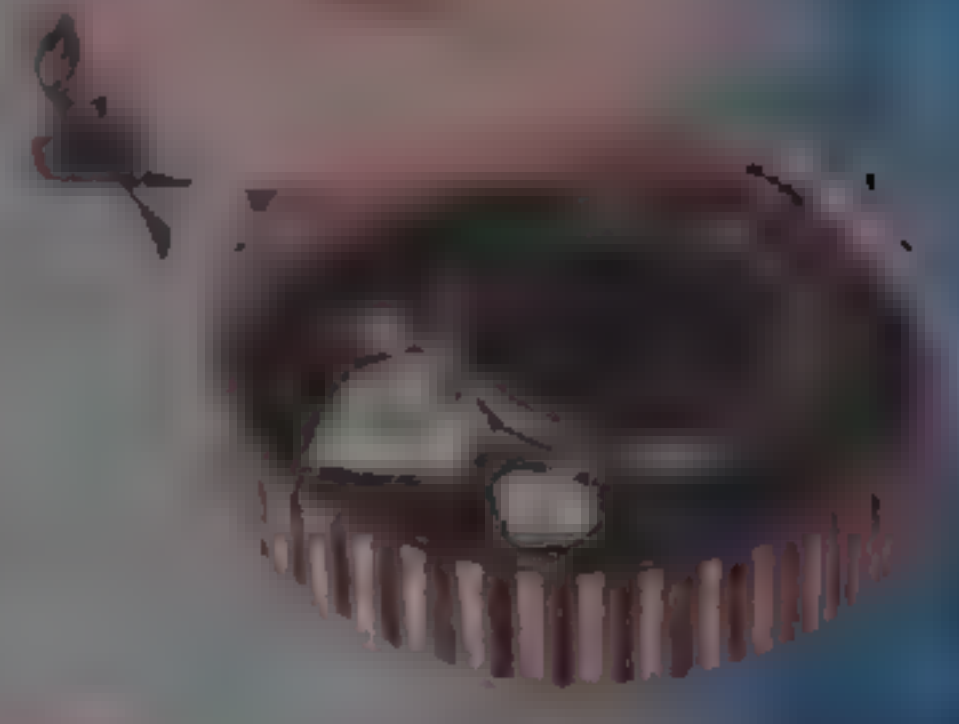
Alton Ellis, anything (Trojan) A pioneering music legend in his own right, Alton Ellis left the world too soon at the tender age of 70. Stirring things up before Bob Marley was on the scene, the man known as the Godfather of Rocksteady has an extensive discography and any album of his you happen to come by is a guaranteed gem; *Cry Tough*, *Love Is the Way* and the *Be Yourself* compilations are good places to start.

Burning Spear, Jah Is Real (Burning Spear) This summer marked the release of reggae legend Burning Spear's latest recording, a masterful album filled with his long-standing message of unity and peace. Vocal harmonies and catchy horn riffs give each song

COVER: JAMES HAMILTON

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VUEWEEKLY DVD Gift guide

MEAN

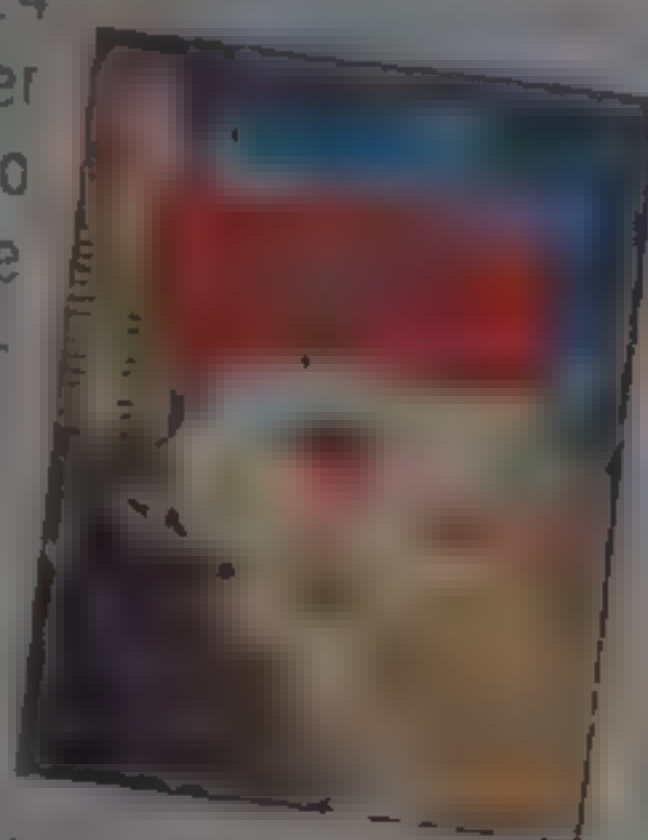
Body of War (Cinéma) For the political overgoer. Tomas Young is the body at the heart of Phil Donahue's and Ellen Spiro's film. He enlisted, Iraq, and took a bullet that would change his mobility and his life. A bracingly outspoken look at a family riven by war and a patient that allowed the Bush administration to push his agenda on Americans like Young. Extras include an Eddie Vedder music video for "No More," interviews with the filmmakers, CSPAN coverage of the House and Senate debates leading up to the Iraq War resolution, deleted scenes and a list of 10 ways to act out against the war.

Elite Squad (Weinstein) For the discerning festival judge, jury and executioner. Shooting onto disc after a leaked early version stormed through Brazil and then the final cut snatched the Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Fest, José Padilha's first fiction feature is a controversial follow-up to *Bus 174*. That critic-proof doc looked into the life of a bus hijacker who grew up in Rio's slums, but here Padilha moves to the

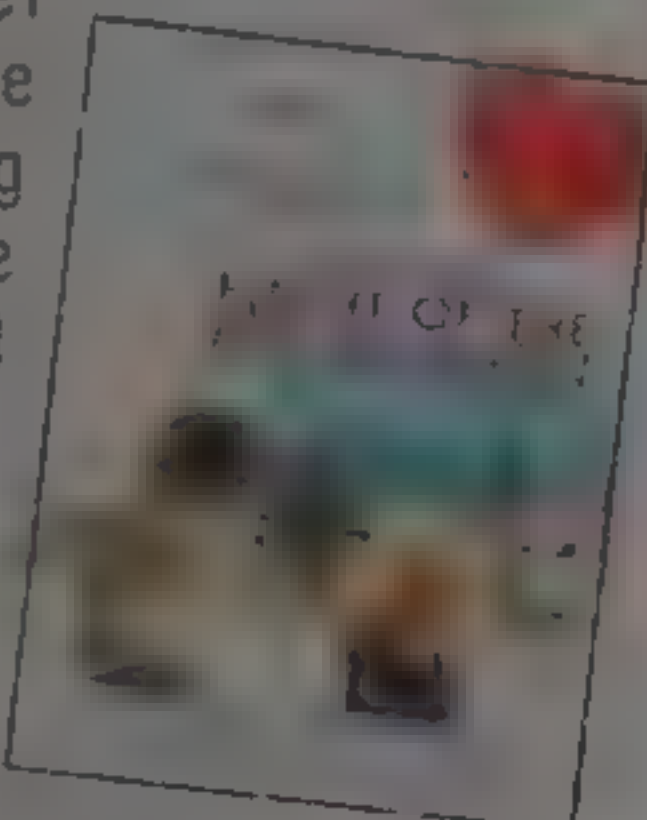


other side. Based on a sociologist's book, the drama follows Special Police Battalion team members who storm the slums. Is it pseudo-fascist, as some have denounced it, or an impassive reflection of a vigilante-cop culture? Decide for yourself. No extras, though.

The Fall (Sony) For the visual-splendour addict. Tarsem Singh (*The Cell*) shot the film on location in 24 different countries over four years, adding no CGI effects. A tall tale told to a girl in a hospital becomes a sumptuous, grandiose, overflowing spectacle replete with ludicrously beautiful images. Or, as one critic put it, "the most glorious, wonderful mess put onscreen since Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*." The extras come in pairs: two audio commentaries, two deleted scenes, two behind-the-scenes featurettes



Flight of the Red Balloon (IFC) For the foreign-film tourist. Hou Hsiao-Hsien's light little riff on Albert Lamorisse's classic *The Red Balloon* features Juliette Binoche as the mother of a boy who takes his Taiwanese babysitter through Paris, a little red balloon tagging along. My colleague Josef Braun noted that the acclaimed Asian director's first French feature is "characteristically



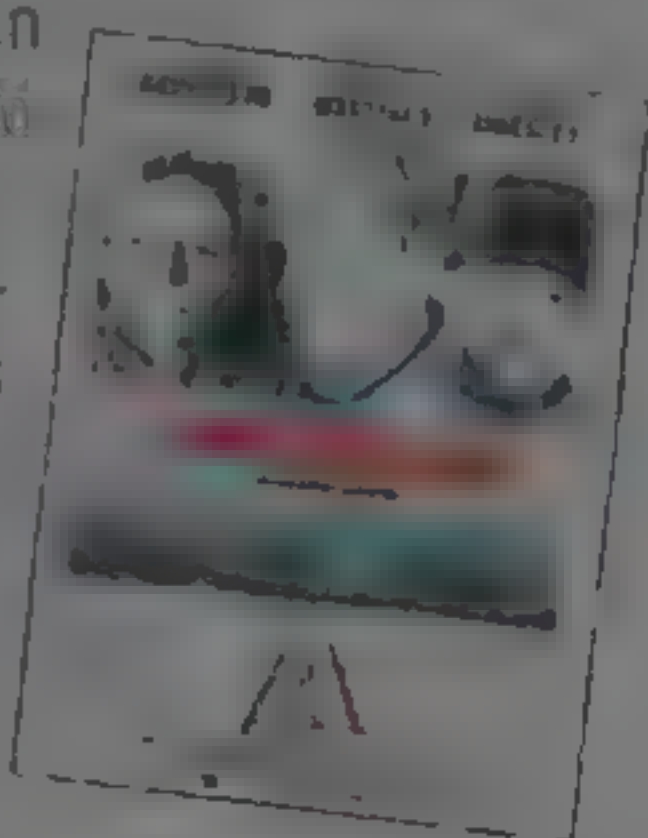
elegant ... flowing with fully realized characters and unassuming grace." Unfortunately, the only extra is a trailer.

Surfwise (Magnolia) For the doc-watcher. The "first family" of surfing were the Paskowitzes, led by father Doc, who left a medical career and took his family on the road, off the grid, and into the waves. Director Doug Pray follows the kids' aquatic and nomadic childhood through interviews and home movies; some of the siblings feel that their hard-edged yet peace-



and-health-espousing father left them afloat in the real world. Extras include a conversation with Doc, a featurette on the "Surfers Healing" organization that helps autistic kids and a commentary track

Transsiberian (First Look) For the edgy-thriller fan. The *Transsiberian* (First Look) stars Emily Mortimer and Woody Harrelson as American tourists, their relationship frayed, on a train that goes off the rails. Ben Kingsley, playing a narcotics investigator, gets on board as this chiller rumbles on through the *Transsiberian*. *Session 9* proved, he can engineer menace, and a stockyard of critics have steamed out the word Hitchcockian in praise of this one. The only extra is on Blu-Ray, a half-hour "Making-of." —BRIAN GIBSON / brian@vueweekly.com



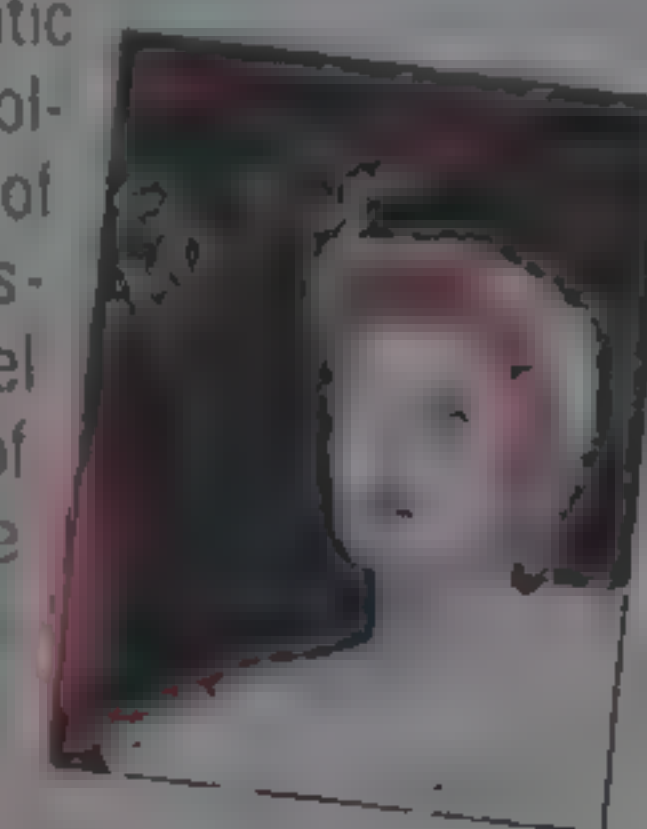
AND THE OLD

The Godfather—The Coppola Restoration (Paramount) The original offer you can't refuse and its sequels have been newly cleaned up for this deserving new deluxe edition. Even given the flaws of the final chapter, the trilogy's a tough masterpiece to argue with, a rigorous and tragic yet immensely pleasurable milestone that

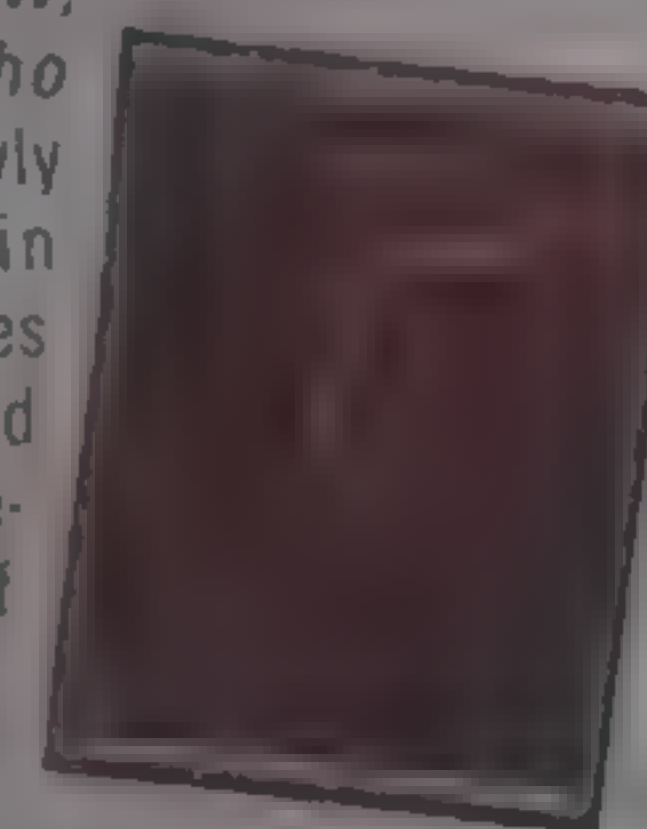
continues to speak to our sense of American life and ambition through the guise of an immigrant mafia family's rise and fall. These films are the bedrock of Francis Ford Coppola's oeuvre, a dazzling showcase for the talents of Pacino, Brando, De Niro, Gordon Willis, Dean Tavoularis, et al, and a testament to how stunningly the best movies can climb the scale from intimate to operatic and back again



The Earrings of Madame de ... , Le Plaisir, La Ronde (Criterion) Among the most under-represented great auteurs of the golden age, Max Ophüls, master of the elegantly baroque tracking shot, has finally received some prestige DVD treatment. The first is a comedy of passions and a study in the cinematic power of objects, following the destiny of the titular accessories as they travel through the hands of several lovers; the second is a meditation of three of Guy de Maupassant's best stories; the third an inspired daisy chain of romantic dalliance; every one of these is a masterpiece. Now if we can just get some of Ophüls' American films on DVD—*The Reckless Moment*, *Caught* and most especially *Letter From an Unknown Woman* await a new audience

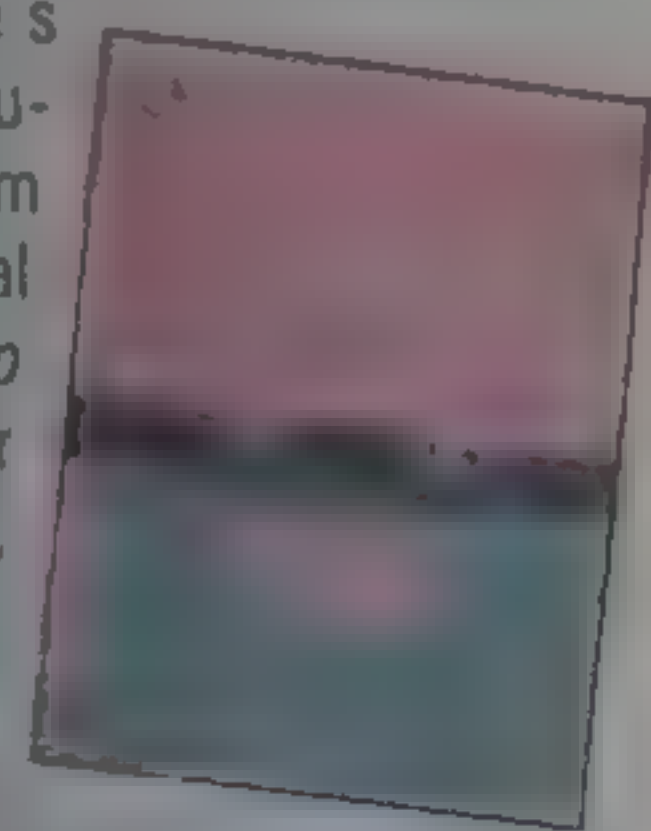


Rear Window, Vertigo, Psycho (Universal) Newly re-packaged in book-like volumes with improved image and supplements, each of these masterworks exude at once the formal precision and fathomless perversion that make Alfred Hitchcock's among the most durable and endlessly fascinating bodies of work. Voyeurism, necrophilia and adultery

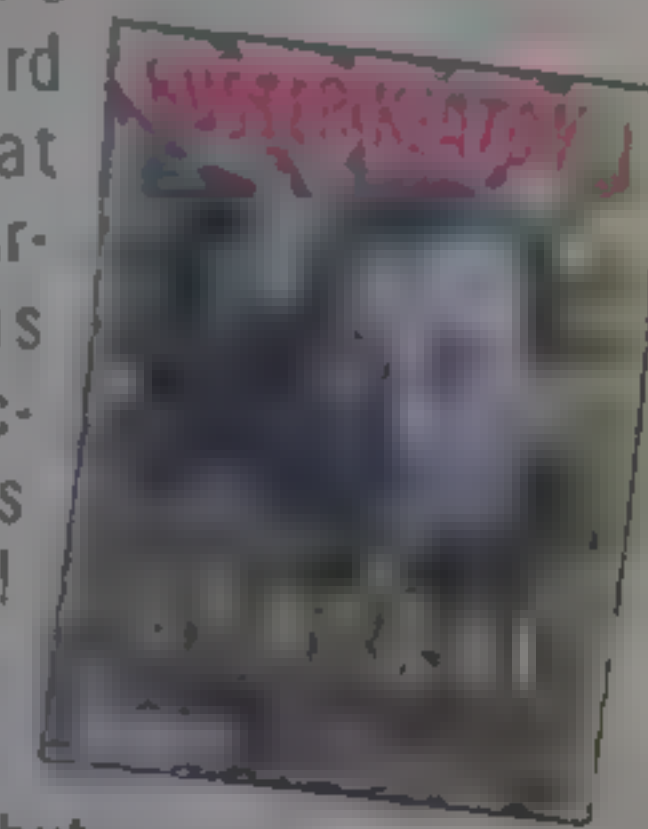


abound—and that's just among the protagonists! Thwarted, delayed or destroyed desire link these thrillers about incapacitated men, death-haunted women and private traps that cannot be escaped from

Aki Kaurismäki's Proletariat Trilogy (Eclipse) Finnish writer/director Aki Kaurismäki's peculiar style is best summed-up as Bressonian comedy, marked by the audaciously unwavering composure of his actors and an approach to narrative so concise as to constitute its own kind of minimalist poetry—most of his movies clock in under 75 minutes. He's also hugely influenced by both film noir and the formal elegance of *Tokyo Story* director Yasujiro Ozu, which inject the work with a healthy interest in crime while getting enormous emotional mileage out of the simplest and most tranquil of images. These early works, each about working class losers trying to find love and a decent rock and roll show, are immensely rewarding for viewers who appreciate less-is-more tactics and an aestheticization of Nordic gloom



The General (Kino) Had he not died when Kaurismäki was all of 10, Buster Keaton would have made one hell of a Kaurismäki hero—his deadpan contains multitudes. Made near the end of the silent era, *The General*, now in a superb two-disc special edition, proves just how well war lends itself to slapstick comedy, with Keaton's ostensible coward exhibiting great derring-do in pursuit of his fiancée's abductors as America's seized by Civil War. Train chases and collapsing facades are but some of the film's awesome spectacles, and they're all the more thrilling when juxtaposed with Keaton's singular stony gaze. —JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vueweekly.com



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Giving gifts to gamers: a guide

DARREN ZENKO / darren@vviewweekly.com

If you're reading this guide as a true seeker, honestly unsure as to what the gamer in your life might appreciate under the tree and desperately looking for answers, I will tell you now, in my best Cliché Fantasy Wizard tone of voice: **Guess not the wishes of thy Loved One**, for down that path lies the disappointment of *Lame Games for the Wrong System! Better the common-places of Socks and Underwear than the cursed Unplayable Disc!*

Seriously. Don't guess. Don't go into the store and ask the dude "What's good?" If you have to get a solid, explicit entry on the wish list, go generic. Gift certificates are the default of last resort, better to pick up **system-specific Points cards** redeemable in the consoles' online stores. Every system offers plenty of downloadable little treasures that a gamer might otherwise never spring for; they'll think warmly of you when your thoughtful gift makes that drunken download of *Shining Force II*.

Even better, why not think outside the glowing box ... and put your thoughts into another box, a box of colorful cardboard? "Party" video games are one thing, but nothing beats a **good board game** for sociable holiday fun. Might I recommend *Carcassonne*? Actually, I can't recommend it highly enough; this multi-award-winning German game of kingdom-building strategy takes two minutes to learn, plays fast with zero set-up time, and offers endless hours of joyful competition for 2-5 players. If you must go digital, an electronic version is available for download (see above) on the Xbox Live Arcade.

Books are always good gifts, and

GIFT GUIDE | GAMES

there are plenty of titles available, from glossy coffee-table tomes to schlocky tracts, on the subject of games and gaming. One book every gamer—and every non-gamer interested in the technique of the medium—should have on their shelf is Raph Koster's *A Theory of Fun for Game Design*. Deep and thoughtful, and at the same time personal and informal, Koster's extended essay explores the nature of play, the psychology of fun and the challenges of game design, accompanied by the author's own charmingly amateurish illustrations. Enlightening, entertaining and accessible, Koster does for games what James Barber did for cooking.

ABOVE ALL, remember that for all the time we spend in virtual world, gamers are still beings of blood and bone. Why not treat your gamer to a **session or two of massage therapy** to work out the kinks that come from hours of intense zombie-slaying? On the flipside of that, you can never go wrong with a **bottle of classy booze**; there are few pleasures as fine as the soothing clink of cubes in crystal as one watches a long loading screen refracted through liquid gold, or the warm glow of a bodied Cabernet spreading through your chest as you consider your inventory screen.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, friends; may all your achievements be unlocked and all your games be saved. ♥

GIFT GUIDE

STARTING FROM PAGE 40

...feeling and the smoothness
...that this Rucker still knows
...keep it steady!

Various Artists
...the Rise
...in Dance

Ball Culture (Soul Jazz) Recently re-released, this is one of the best samplings of the genre ever compiled. With names like Tenor Saw, Barrington Levy and Yellowman, how is it humanly possible to go wrong here? The professionally selected songs, stretching back to the early '80s, are sure to please both connoisseurs and newbies alike. —MIKE GARTH / michael@vuweekly.com

Indie rock for the indie rocker on your list

Fucked Up, The Chemistry of Common Life (Matador) Sure to be on every critic's top-10 list in a few weeks, Fucked Up's newest has the band at its most experimental—tough for a band that has built a career on pushing the limits of hardcore.

Kimya Dawson, Alphabutt (K) A favourite amongst the editors of this paper but not amongst my *children*—I've nearly worn out the grooves in my copy, sorry guys!—Kimya Dawson's children's album has proven more popular with people my age than any kids I know.

Japanther, Tut Tut Now Shake Ya Butt (Menlo Park) Sure it contains some boring poems by Penny Rimbaud, but Japanther's newest also contains its greatest song ever, "The Dirge." For that reason alone—oh, and blue vinyl—it's a great gift.

Wolf Parade, At Mount Zoomer (Sub Pop) Yeah so this one feels a lot like a "second album" at first, but it's a real grower. I wasn't so stoked on *At Mount*

Zoomer upon first listen, but eventually I couldn't get the songs out of my head. By the time all the other gifts have lost their lustre, this one will just be coming around.

Fleet Foxes, Fleet Foxes (Sub Pop) I don't know what can be said about the dreamy folk pop of Fleet Foxes that hasn't already been said. How about this—get the vinyl and the band's first EP comes free with it. That's two gifts in one! —BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vuweekly.com

Metal for breakfast, lunch and dinner

Metallica, Death Magnetic (Warner Bros) Chances are the dedicated metalhead in your family has already either picked this one up or dismissed it out of hand. But if you happen to know a young and impressionable youngster who's just starting to grow his hair out, you could do worse than setting him out on this path

Metal Blade and Nuclear Blast Records Really, these two labels are near the top of the heap when it comes to metal, especially if you know someone who likes it loud and heavy, with a shot of broken glass for gargling. Pick an

Exodus, Let There Be Blood (Zaentz) This classic thrash band—Metallica's Kirk Hammett started out in this group—revisits its 1985 debut, *Bonded By Blood*. Good for a history lesson for the kids, with production that they might find a little more palatable than on the original.

Bonded By Blood, Feed the Beast (Earache) The kids are keeping thrash alive with a nod to the past and an eye on the future. —EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuweekly.com

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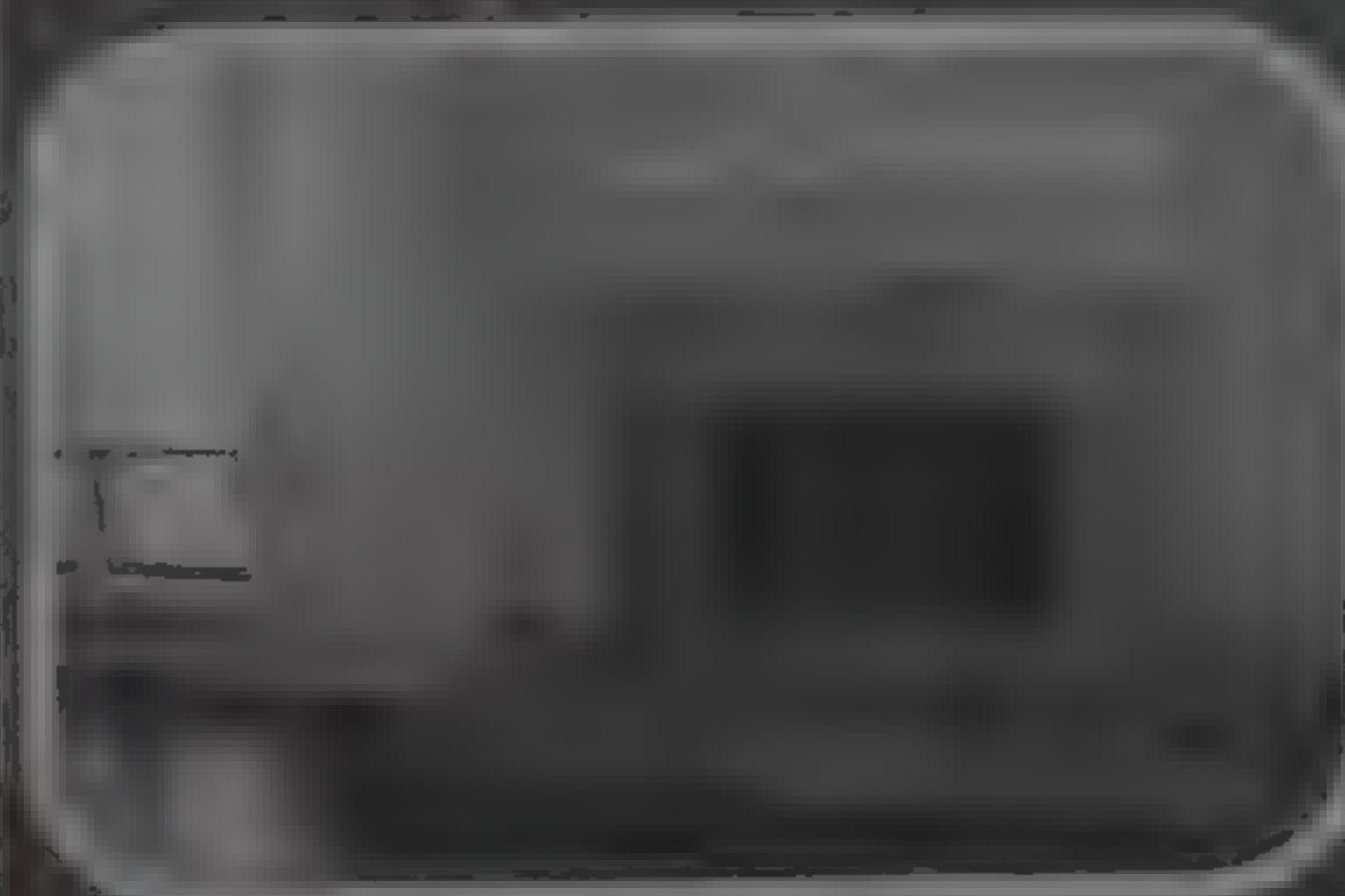
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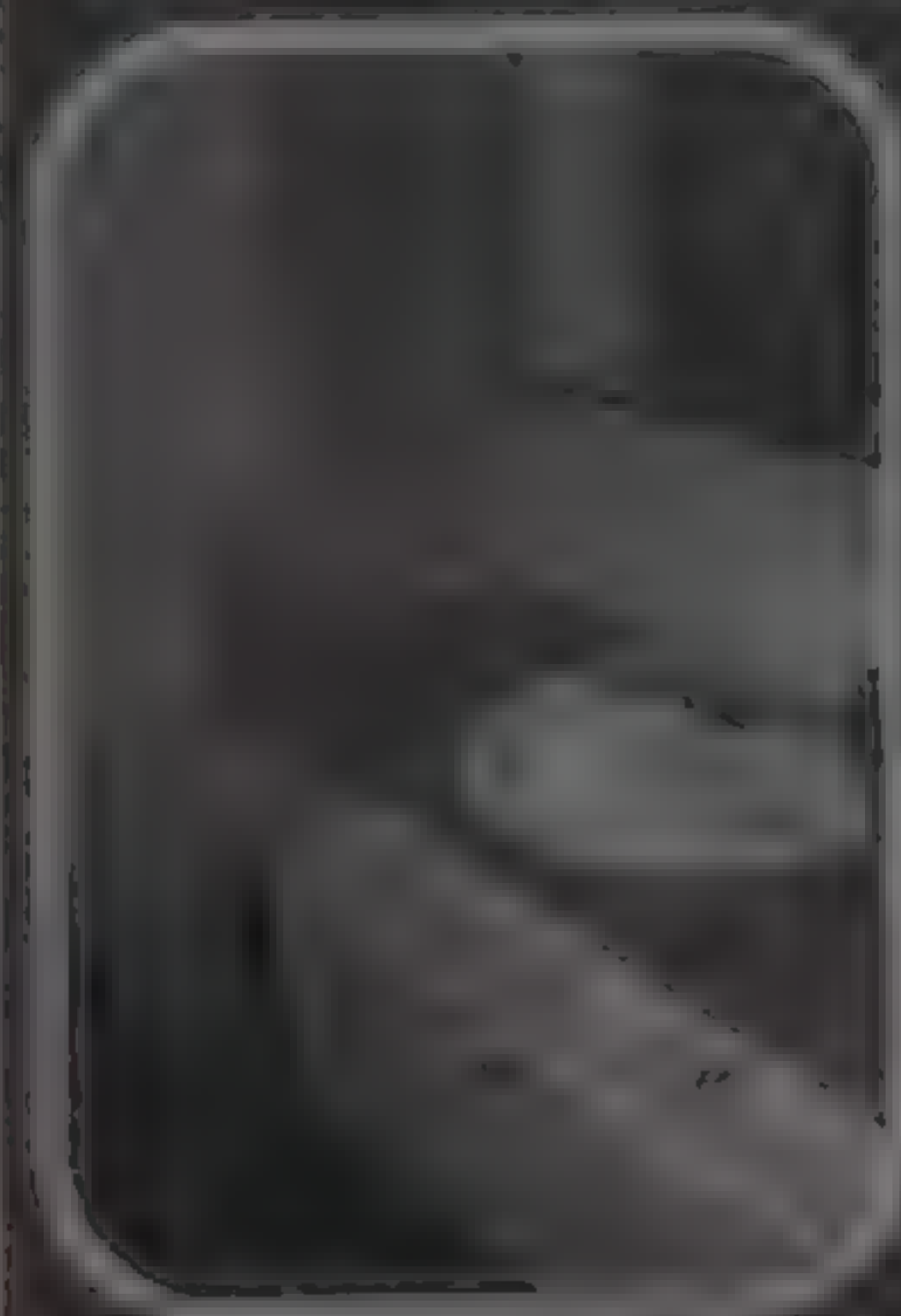


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VUEWEEKLY BOOKS

Gift guide

Weller includes fascinating glimpses of the cultural topography of the changing times—her reconstruction of the position of knocked-up unmarrieds in Canada in the '60s is just one of her many digressions. (Hardcover: 592 pages)

The Best of World Café: Great Conversations From the NPR's Most Popular Music Show, David Dye (Running Press). What do Gang of Four, Joan Armatrading, and Elton John have in common? They've all sat down for a far-ranging conversation with Dye, for his long-running NPR program. Formatted as transcripts of interviews with a huge variety of musicians working across genres, bracketed by pertinent commentary that marks NPR offerings, this is dip-in-and-out reading for any music fan with a strong interest in classic American and British artists, and some Canadians—Dye leads off with Bruce Cockburn. (Paperback: 417 pages)

John Lennon: The Life, Philip Norman (Doubleday Canada). Norman's loving and almost distressingly thorough examination of the Beatles' lifespan and impact in *Shout!*, seems incidental compared to this bio-epic lionization of Lennon. The martyred rock star is framed in close-up on the cover, all signature glasses and shaggy, working class hero hair, as the spare title announces Norman's lofty ambitions. And over the next 1000 pages or so, the biographer leaves no Lennon stone unturned from his impoverished childhood to his tragic shooting. (Hardcover: 864 pages)

Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain, Oliver Sacks (Vintage Canada). Neurologist Sacks is one of our few celebrity scientists, and with good reason: no one has done more to popularize the workings, quirks and sometimes appalling glitches of our brains' architecture. Like his other books, *Musicophilia* marries Sacks' humour, compassion and elegance and draws on the many strange and amazing cases that come his way and the latest research and theories, as well as his own lifelong adoration of music. In his pages, he explores how music is entwined with memory, consciousness, identity, meaning, emotion, healing and our humanity itself. (Paperback: 417 pages)



Girls Like Us: Carole King, Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon—And the Journey of a Generation, Sheila Weller (Atria). This extravagant slice of pop culture history examines the intersecting and individual paths of three iconic female artists as they changed the face and form of

music. Weller's thesis is both broad (no pun intended) and deep: she seeks to demonstrate how the social conditions of the '50s and '60s produced these particular women, and closes the circle by showing how they in turn changed their cohorts and left a lasting legacy. On the way,

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VUEWEEKLY ART

Gift guide



Van Halen—A Visual History: 1978 - 1984. Neil Zlozower (Chronicle Books)
The history of Van Halen—not Van Hagar—captured by one of rock's top photographers.

Fuck You: Rock and Roll Portraits. Neil Zlozower (Chronicle Books)
Throughout his 39-year career, Zlozower has kept a file of photos featuring his subjects flipping him the bird. If you've ever wondered what Chick Corea looks like with his middle finger flying high, now's your chance to find out.

A Visual History of the Famines. Raymond Biesinger (Belgravia Press)
Impressive. Locally made. Complicated. Intense. Worth sitting down and pouring over again and again.

Original art. Seriously, there are some ridiculously talented artists in Edmonton. Talk to them, check out their art shows and see if you can score a truly unique gift. —EDEN MUNRO
/ eden@vueweekly.com

Pearl Jam vs Ames Bros: 13 Years of Tour Posters. Ames Bros and Brad Klaussen (Ames Bros and Pearl Jam)
Pretty much what the title says: 13 years of Pearl Jam tour posters by the Ames Bros. The art is impressive, and it's fleshed out with commentary from the artists and the band members, along with a few interviews.

Tech corner

LYLE BELL / lyle@vueweekly.com

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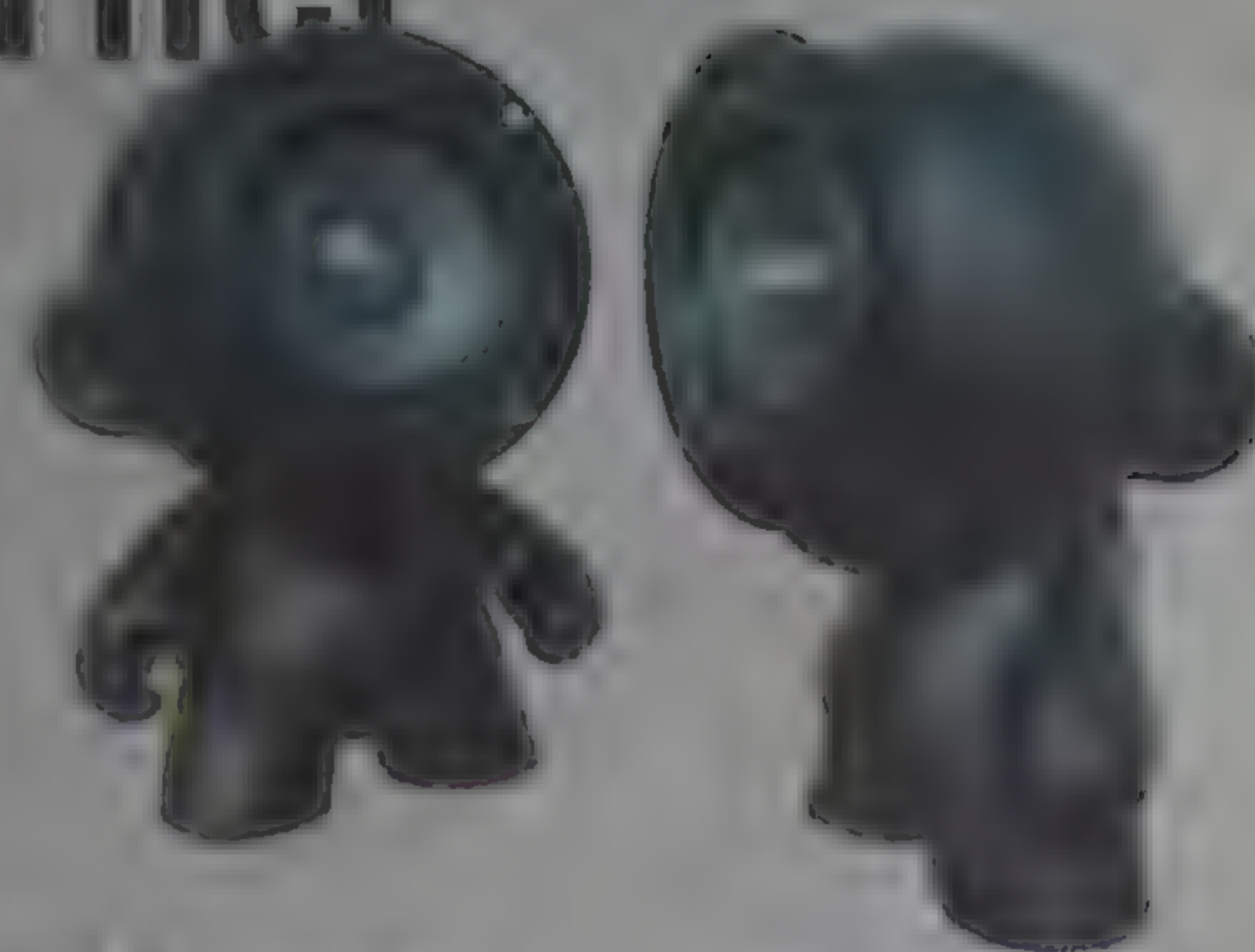
davesmithinstruments.com/products/mopho

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Korg Nano-Key

korg.com

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GADGETS

Vinyl Killer Record Player

razy works.com

The Vinyl Killer is back! This time instead of a boogie van, they've wrapped it in a snazzy Cooper Mini shell. Aloha, Mr Hand!

Empress Super delay pedal

empresseffects.com/superdelay.php

MXR Carbon Copy analog delay pedal

jimdunlop.com/index.php?page=products/pcm&id=366

Both are pretty amazing, only one requires a second mortgage

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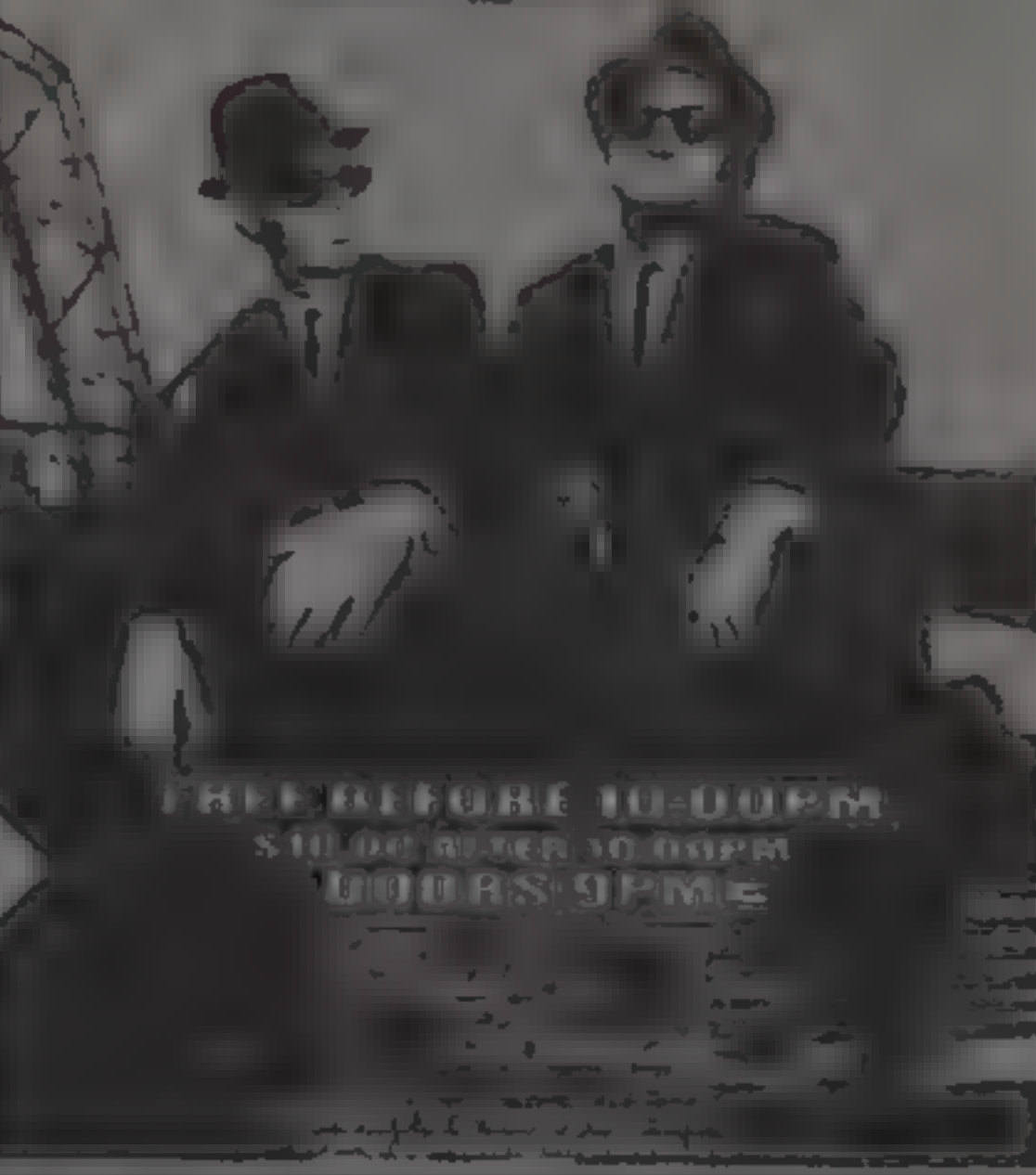
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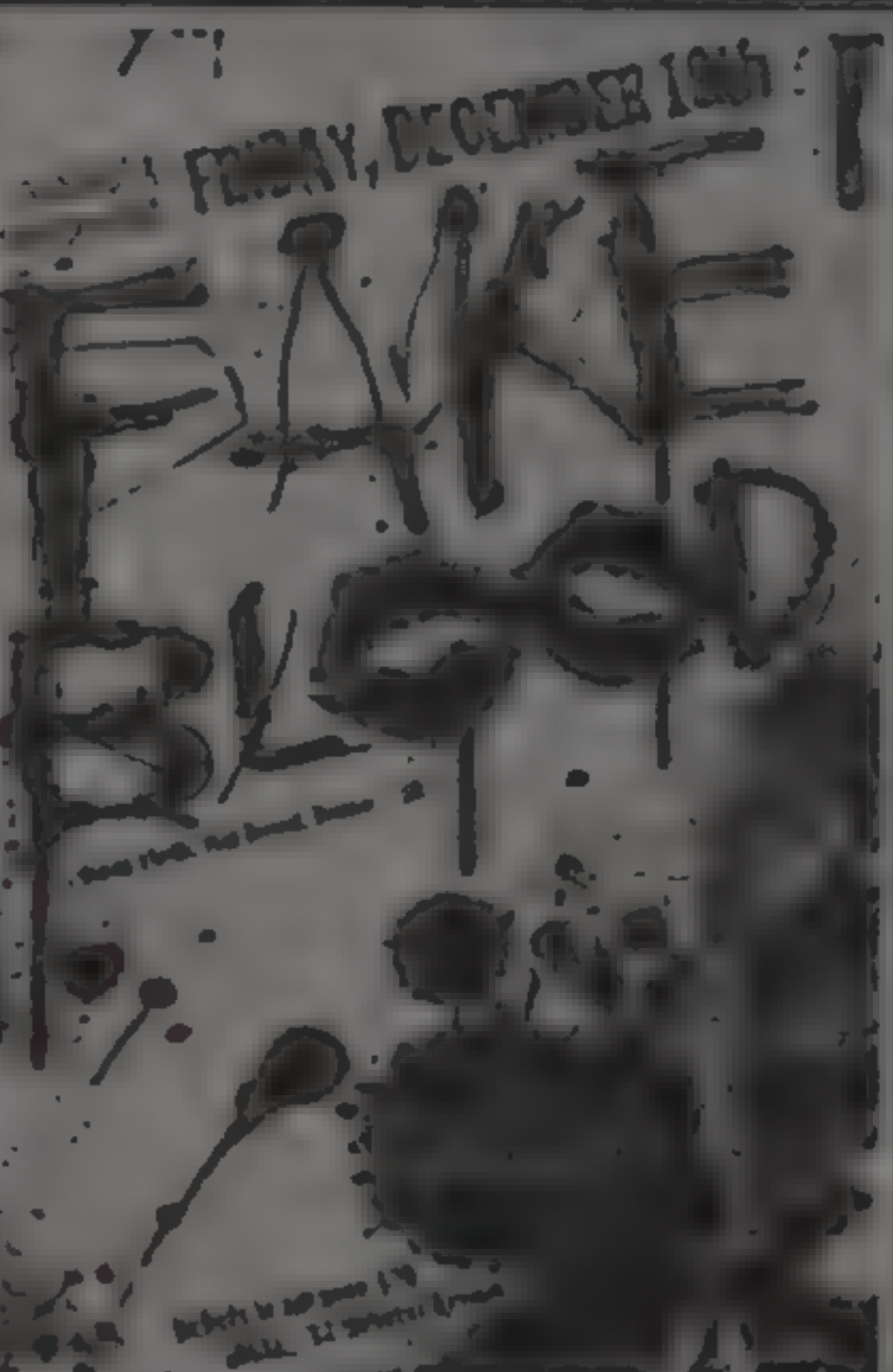
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Recession progression

Why the economic downturn is good for music

MUSIC

BACKLASH BLUES

ROLAND PETERSON
roland@vuwweekly.com

In the Western world, we are in a constant state of media saturation. From time to time, we are given a new thing to be afraid of, a fresh problem for us to hoist our views on to occasionally obscure us from deeper, more realistic concerns. Be it SARS, hurricanes, Cold War rockets, terrorist threats or Salmonella on alfalfa sprouts, the media will find a blanket source of fear and feed on it to gain viewers on a "Keep Up To Date Or Die" basis. Recently, the hot topic is the flagging economy, the weak dollar, the recession, and for once, this might be a subject worth seriously addressing in the media.


While some Americans are trampling Wal-Mart employees for the hottest deals on flat screen TVs, others have found a way to deal with societal problems through an artistic medium. Not entirely

noble or free from contradiction, Young Jeezy's *The Recession* is equal parts commentary on lower class disassociation with the government and instruction manual for selling crack cocaine. While he isn't exactly Michael Eric Dyson, he sporadically voices the problems ("Pay all these damn bills, feed all these damn kids") of the people in an earnest, insightful way. There's even proof in the production, a minimalist wash of synth tracks, steering away from costly sample clearance. Some could even spin the pay-what-you-want concept adopted by Radiohead and Girl Talk as a good faith response to people's new view of music as a disposable luxury.

AND THAT'S A real problem. Universal Music Group posted a third quarter revenue of \$1.4 billion, which is a 6.2 per cent decrease from the same time period in 2007. Through the first nine months of 2008, Universal has made 3.8 per cent less than it did in 2007. More than ever, it seems like people are cutting entertainment out of their budgets, eschewing it

for more practical needs or finding an algal means for procuring it. And the result of transparent marketing schemes alienating a more enlightened listenership and a general downturn in quality product. When TI is in a position he has to release an album every year, he's never going to line up that Axl-style conceptual masterpiece, is he?

All of this makes me wonder what we'd be if we had focused on not rewarding bad music with our money a long time ago. Would the '90s have been better if we'd sent the message that boy bands were not going to fool us? Now, the school response from labels is to replicate what has worked before and it's not going down as easy this time. The good thing about the recession is that it forces you to look yourself in the mirror and decide what records are really necessary, what artists you want to support in a hard time for unorthodox occupations and what art really means to you when it comes down to numbers. You're going to need something to while away the time you work, right? ▽



REVUE / WED, NOV. 26 / BISON BOY / STARLITE ROOM

DIARY OF A GIG FIEND

Confederacy of Dunces, Dad Rock, T.J. Hookah and Rear Admiral Saunders

BUDDY'S Open mic every Tue, 8-10pm
SECOND CUP-STANLEY MILNER LIBRARY Open mic every Tue: 7-9pm
SIDELINERS PUB Tuesday All Star Jam with Alicia Tait and Ricky Sidecar, 8pm

STARLITE ROOM Murder, Soilent Green, Misery Index; all ages event, 7pm (door), \$17

TICKETMASTER Blackbyrd, Megatunes, FS (Whyte Ave)

WARRIOR SUITE Jam Sessions: Dan Davis, 8-10pm (door)/9pm (show), \$3 (member/\$3 (guest))

WINSPEAR CENTRE ENMAX HALL Edmonton Columbian Choirs, Young Columbian Singers directed by Elaine Dunbar

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STARLITE ROOM Murder, Soilent Green, Misery Index; all ages event, 7pm (door), \$17

TICKETMASTER Blackbyrd, Megatunes, FS (Whyte Ave)

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Dismemberment

As Black Dahlia Murder's lead screamer Trevor Strnad searches for a lyrical theme to down on the band's fourth album, he might pursue the ideas of fallen and dismemberment.

Just days before the start of the band's Canadian tour, which begins a month before six weeks' worth of dates in Europe, BDM has to face the fleeing of guitarist John Hämäläinen from its fold. The five-piece is now a four—made up of Strnad, guitarist Brian Eshbach, bassist Bert and drummer Shannon Lucas (formerly of All That Remains).

BDM has been through this before, with both minor and major lineup changes. Just before heading into the studio for its 2007 album, the band lost drummer Pierre-Louis. Before finding a replacement in Lucas, it was what Strnad calls a dark period.

"It was just like a really brutal test. It was scary, scary times," Strnad admits. The interview takes place just days before the recent announcement. "You just don't want to be away

PREVIEW **BLACK DAHLIA MURDER** **WITH SHANNON LUCAS**

too long with a member change—the fear was that we wouldn't be able to come back in a reasonable amount of time and kids would kind of move on.

"It's a pretty cutthroat kind of thing out there, dude," he adds. "You gotta get out there and tour and you've gotta be available. And then we had the album coming up too, and we were, like, who's going to record it? We didn't know. It was a scary time, definitely a scary time, but I think we felt like we had something to prove with that, overcoming that, too. I think that definitely came through on the album."

WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT of Hämäläinen's departure, the things Strnad said take on darker hues and gloomier meanings. He'd spoken about how the band's decision to head out on the road without its soloing guitarist is proof positive that any melodeath metal worth its mettle can't be bucked off its stead so easily. A few new horseshoes might not be a bad idea, though. ▽

band?" Instead, BDM could focus on heading deeper into the darker caverns of its speedy death metal.

He also spoke about the long-awaited BDM DVD ... how each of the members had filmed extended interviews and how the band was going to use footage from its upcoming European tour to cap it off.

Our fans have been asking about it forever, and we've been kind of just spinning our wheels about it," he says. "But it's hard for a bunch of stoners to get anything done, is what it boils down to. We're finally kind of wrapping it up.

"And I'm pretty pumped on it," he adds. "It's going to be cool, I think."

It's hard to know how much these things still hold true. Strnad has a hard time pinpointing any one thing that BDM learned from losing its drummer, but the band's decision to head out on the road without its soloing guitarist is proof positive that any melodeath metal worth its mettle can't be bucked off its stead so easily.

A few new horseshoes might not be a bad idea, though. ▽

performing there, and he was pleased with what he found: an audience ready and willing to listen to the music.

"In the Netherlands, for example, the bar shuts down almost—nobody goes to the washroom and nobody goes to get a drink," he recalls of his experience. "They're just sitting, standing, watching the performance and then when it ends they go get a drink or go for their smoke or whatever, but during the performance it's like everything is focused in one direction."

Templeton believes that the difference between European and North American audiences comes down to several factors.

"I definitely think that perhaps there's not as much of a social aspect—they're there to see the performer—but also I think culturally it's maybe how they've been brought up," he considers, before adding the physical characteristics of the venues also makes a difference. "The venues in Europe are built to bring about an atmosphere that draws people

to focus in on the performer.

"The way the room is set up, it's maybe not super long and narrow," he continues. "It might just be a smaller area that's not really built for conversations in the background. It's built for a listening experience."

With all of the travelling that Templeton has been doing, it's almost certain that his experiences will manifest themselves in his songwriting—he's just not sure in what way.

I think it affects not only songwriting but different aspects of your life and also your art form," he says, "because when you move from a city that you're well rooted in and that's familiar and you go to somewhere new, your support network of artists is something you need to find and create."

"It's been good, but it's been an effort," he adds. "In Montréal everything is new for me visually—when you look at the architecture and the surroundings and just the way the city is set up ... subconsciously it affects the way you create. ▽

MARK TEMPLETON

It's been a while now since Mark Templeton sold his house in Edmonton and moved to Montréal. The experimental songwriter, as fond as he still is of his home town, is grateful for the opportunity to try a city like Montréal on for size.

Of course, in the months that Templeton has called Montréal home, he's actually been away from the city for a good part of them.

"In the time I've been there I've been away for probably two months of it," he laughs. "I came back here in September for a collaborative project with Aaron [Templeton]. We presented that in September and then I hung around for a bit to finish that, and then I went on tour in October to Europe."

Though Templeton had travelled in the past, this trip was his first time

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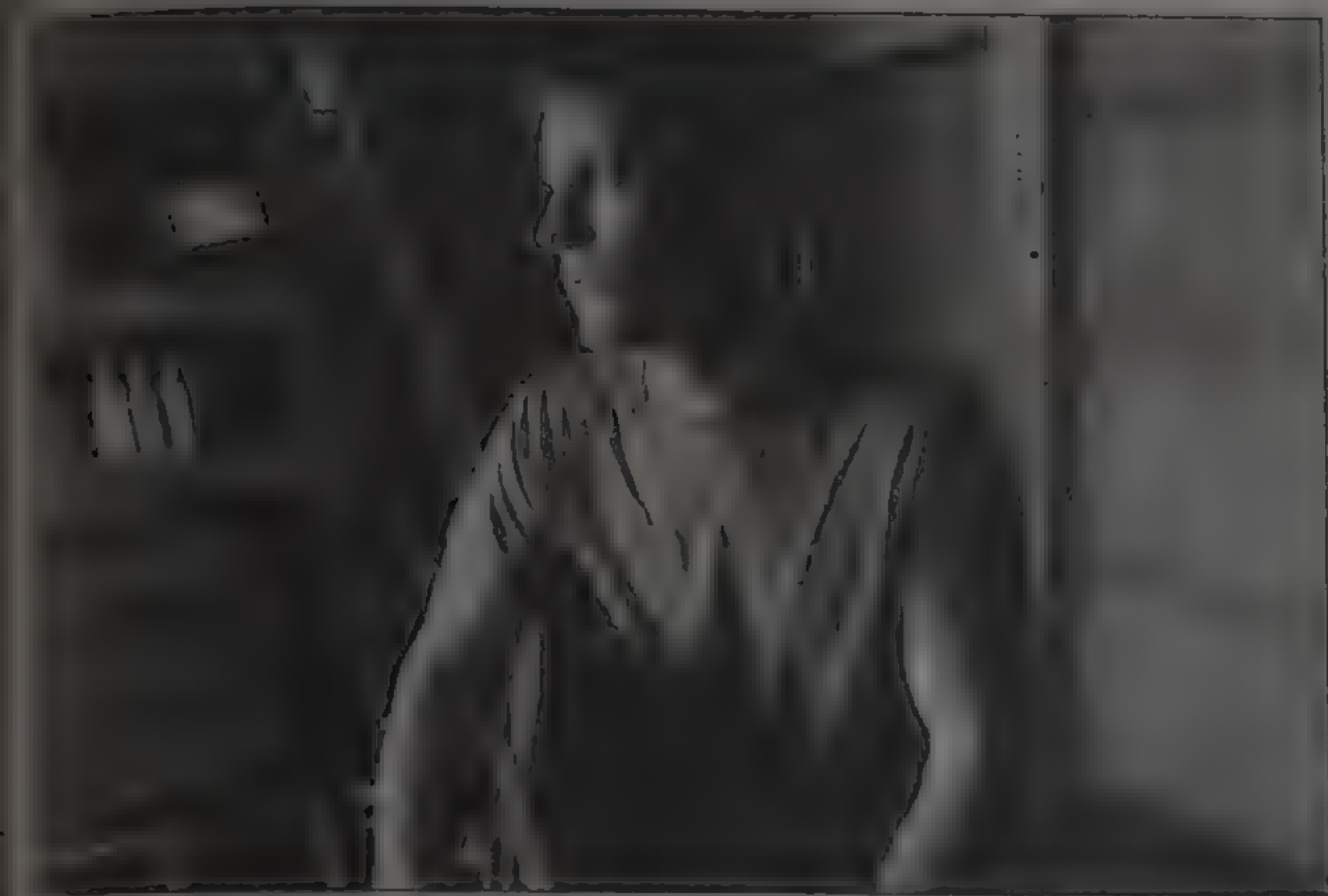
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Road dog holds back a few



By STEWART / jstewart@vancouverweekly.com

After a disappointing loss in this week's basketball game, Regina native **Chad Kichula** still manages to sound upbeat. "It happens every game—I start out by not playing that well, then just as I start to heat up, the game finishes."

Maybe it's this same slow-cooking intensity that makes his roots-rock performances in high demand throughout western Canada and the United States, resulting in his songs getting picked up by more and more radio stations south of the border.

"There seems to be a genuine appreciation for my music down there," he explains. "The songs have really found an audience in the States."

A singer-songwriter in the tradition of working class heroes like Bruce Springsteen, Steve Earle and early John Mellencamp, Kichula and his band have travelled back and forth across Western Canada enough times that it's starting to become routine. However, this Friday marks their first appearance in Edmonton.

"I don't know how we kept missing it," Kichula laughs. "But we're excited

"We're forced to be more flexible and play with a lot more dynamics. I can come out and just play solo, or we can have the drummer play with brushes and bring things down, or we can turn up and rock."

Backed by the same players for a period spanning back several years, Kichula is quick to note how integral the players are to the songs and the performances.

"We're a tight group. If someone can't make it out to some shows, it's not like we just replace them, we'll just shuffle things around and find a way to make it work."

WITH ALL THE TRACKING finished for his upcoming full length *Runners in the Night*, Kichula looks forward to shipping out the completed album in early 2009. While some of the songs were waiting for years to be recorded, others were written over the summer to tie the record together. When writing for the album was finished, Kichula found himself in the unusual position of having no new material left.

"That never happens, you know? You always want to have a few in your pocket, so the pressure was on to write some new stuff. Thankfully I was able to come up with some new songs," he says. "It's really important to not let things come to a conclusion." ▽

PREVIEW
FRI, DEC 5 (8PM)
CHAD KICHULA
WITH KJERSTIN & GARRETT
HULBERT'S, \$10

to play to a new audience, first and foremost. I just want to get the music out there, and for people to take something from the performance home with them."

Playing venues as varied as heavy metal bars to the more intimate environs of restaurants or cafes, Kichula and his band are well suited to adapt to various situations.

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Historically, Polish music has been on the cusp of creativity and the Avant-garde movement since early after World War II. Many exponents of the art of electro-acoustic composition and performance have emerged from schools developed within the first electronic music studios. The earliest pioneers of the art form include such luminaries as Andrzej Dobrowolski, Włodzimierz Kotonski and Zbigniew Wiszniewski. Two of the new generation of Polish electroacoustic composers and performers that have emerged in the current generation include **Włodzimierz Kłiorski** (b. 1952) and **Marek Choloniewski** (b. 1953) who comprise the visiting electro-acoustic and multi-media duo **CH&K**.

Born in Krakow, **Marek Choloniewski** studied composition with Boguslaw Schaeffer at the Krakow Academy of Music, where he has been Professor of Composition at the Electroacoustic Music Studio there since 1976. His work has made him world-renowned as a lecturer, composer, "live computer music" performer, and the author of audio-visual computer projects. As the artistic director of several prestigious festivals of new music in his homeland, he has collaborated with composers and performers in his specialized musical genres from all over the globe.

Włodzimierz Kłiorski, from Zagnanski, near Kielce, earned renown as a jazz musician, specifically as a saxophone virtuoso. As a member of a variety of performing groups including the Polish reggae band Izrael, Kłiorski has also been involved in the domains of composition (primarily for films and theatre), as well as multi-media.

This presentation is another concert in the Edmonton Composers' Concert Society's New Music Alberta Series. Prepare to be immersed in a sonic environment that will mesmerize you and captivate your musical spirit.

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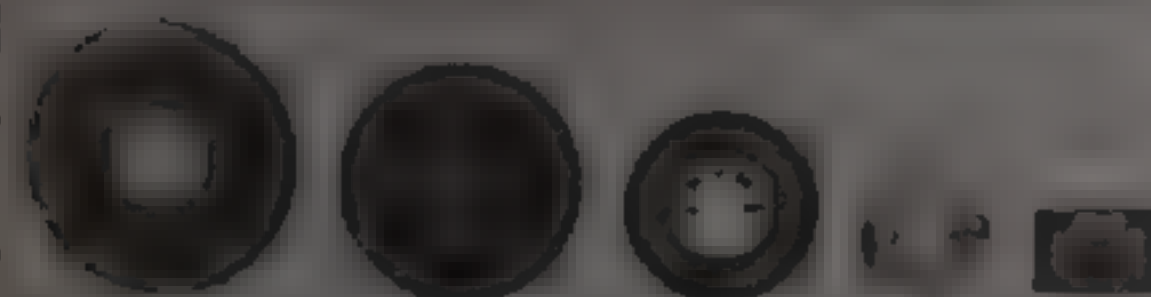
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Thompson gets around

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vancouverweekly.com

In his fourth decade as a songwriter, you might expect **Richard Thompson** to be able to impart some wisdom on music and its historical role in storytelling.

"It's a thing that human beings have been doing for a long time: telling stories through song," Thompson says over the phone from California. "What surprises me is that it still applies. ... The two songs at the top of the request list are both ballads; they're both five, six-minute songs that tell stories."

"I suppose I'm underrating the audience, really. I'm thinking that people, in this age of immediacy and multimedia and stuff, that people are so easily distracted that they don't have that ability," he adds. "They really do have that ability."

OK, maybe asking for some deep thoughts is too much of a cross to bear for the humble artist. He's too busy working on his immortality, thank you very much. How else can you explain a canon of more records than you have fingers and toes (not to mention the scores of albums he's appeared on with the likes of Bonnie Raitt, John Lydon and Loudon Wainwright III)? From the early groundbreaking days of Fairport Convention in the '60s to the three different projects he is currently working, there's an endless fount of challenges to take on.

If Thompson keeps up this pace, there is little chance he'll slip into obscurity. He's already had a tribute album recorded by an impressive list of musicians that included David Byrne and Los Lobos and been awarded several lifetime-achievement types of awards. While he might not have the name recognition of some of his contemporaries, like say Mick Jagger, there is something infinitely more compelling about him—and coming out



PREVIEW

SAT, DEC 6 (8 PM)
RICHARD THOMPSON
MIDNIGHT JAZZ CLUB

with new material is only part of it.

It's also his self-deprecating manner, his literal sense of humour and his drive to constantly test himself.

"You have to keep yourself challenged. If you're going to be any kind of musician, you have to keep pushing yourself and try and do different things, and trying to get better," he explains. "That's crucial. Unless you're really excited about music, unless you're really excited about performing, unless you're excited about the possibilities around the corner, I think you're going to play without any edge. You're going to be a dull musician."

CURRENTLY WORKING ON both an acoustic and an electric album, as well as a song cycle with a string orchestra (what he calls "a talent contest in hell"), there seems little chance that Thompson will slip into the doldrums of musical complacency any time soon.

If he were, though, he could always fall back on soundtrack work. After scoring Werner Herzog's *Grizzly Man*, Thompson went on to doing the same for *The Grizzly Man Diaries*, the serialized prequel to the film that recently aired on Animal Planet.

"I'm really good at bears, now. I can do bears really well," Thompson says. "I'm saying that this is my soundtrack niche. All aspects of bear-dom, I can cover now. Not just the sounds, but bear emotions, the bear necessities, should we say." ▽

THU, DEC 4 (7:30 PM)
EDMONTON JAZZ ORCHESTRA
YARDBIRD SUITE, \$15 - \$25

MARIA KOTOVYCH / maria@vancouverweekly.com

At one time, when Edmontonians wanted to go dancing, they could step into any hotel, each of which employed a big band. Those days are over, yet the jazz presence in Edmonton is still strong. Jazz festivals. The Yardbird Suite. Knowing about Edmonton's large, vibrant jazz scene, we might forget that this genre is not nearly as popular in the general music markets.

Kent Sangster, Music Director of the Edmonton Jazz Orchestra, mentions that jazz and classical music make up about two per cent of the record-buying public, according to one figure.

"It's a niche market that requires some effort from the audience to take it all in—same thing with abstract art or non-abstract art—some people really, really like the idea of contemplating and trying to get inside a piece of art to find out its meaning. Well, the same thing with music, and the more progressive and the more dissonant either classical or jazz or just improvised music becomes, very often the



smaller the audience," Sangster explains.

While Edmonton Jazz Orchestra's concert on Thursday, Dec 4 will feature very little experimental music, it will feature original Canadian works that have been written and/or arranged by members of the ensemble, or by someone with a direct connection to it. Indeed, the entire concert focuses on works that match the personalities and styles of the individual musicians within the Edmonton Jazz Orchestra.

"This concert is really more about individuals' own personalities coming

through with the music, and trying to write for the band," Sangster mentions.

For instance, audiences will hear a piece in a modern jazz guitar approach featuring guitarist Jim Head. In traditional swing music, the guitar has a functioning role within the rhythm section, outside of this style, guitar sounds and solos become more prominent.

"From the 1970s on, there was certainly a redefinition of the guitar's role in a large jazz ensemble," Sangster says.

Regardless of the musical style, a big band sound can create an amazing energy, with 16 people working together to produce an overall momentum, Sangster describes.

"Most of our young audience [members] have not been exposed to live sound like that, because everything is in MP3, and now we live in Facebook land, and that's all good, and that's an exciting time, and you can get lots of stuff out that way. But if you think about it, a lot of people have never been to a symphony orchestra concert, but if they go to one concert, sometimes that's a life-changing experience in terms of, 'I had no idea that sound, beautiful sound, can be created live and you can get caught up in that experience.'" ▽

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All Else Fails brightens the world

by [illegible] / bryan@vancouverweekly.com

For St. Albert-based band All Else Fails, music is not just an end in and of itself, it's a means to an end. The trio uses its music to ask questions about some of the bigger issues facing the world, without necessarily drawing concrete conclusions. Preferring to provoke debate than provide answers, the group's newest album—its first full-length, entitled *Against the Darkening Sky*—delves into what the members see as a world going wrong.

"It's not a specific title, we left it open to interpretation," explains singer and guitarist Barrett Klesko. "As a whole the album is a comment on the state of the world, but we try not to be too preachy about any of our political views or anything like that. It's a commentary on our perceived version of the declining state of the world around us."

All Else Fails—which also includes Mike Chartrand on bass and Brent Francis on drums—thinks that the bigger questions of the world are going unasked in favour of some of the more banal occupations of society. As Klesko explains, the band also sings about the way that the problems facing the world can seem overwhelming, like nothing concrete can ever be done about them.

"It seems to me as I walk through



the world and talk to people, people seem to be focused on things that they can't have control over in any way. When you turn on the TV what do you see? Global News about

everything going wrong in the world or it's celebrity gossip. What we're trying to push with the album is personal interactions with the people around you—instead of being wor-

ried about what's going on across the world, maybe look around at what you see in everyday life," he says. "There's so much going on and it seems to me that people aren't

PREVIEW

FRI, DEC 5 (7 PM)
ALL ELSE FAILS
WITH STARRY STARRY NIGHT, ENDURING THE FALL, HOSTILE HERO
THE TAPHOUSE (9020 MCKENNEY AVE, ST. ALBERT), \$10

paying attention to the things that matter—they're not paying attention to where they could be helping in the world."

THE BAND MEMBERS aren't just saying it though, they also put their money where their mouths are. Sponsoring a family coping with AIDS who live in Tanzania is something the guys in the band committed to early on in the band's existence.

"We're trying to do what we can, it's been really hard to promote our album because we don't want to come off as these self-righteous assholes and that we're just using it as a platform," explains Klesko of the band's intentions. "We honestly believe that we should do what little we can to help, so one of the first things we did when we started writing songs about this stuff is we sponsored the family and decided we should be actually helping. Music is a great way to get new ideas out there and raise awareness about things but it can only go so far." ▽

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REVIEWS

NEW SOUNDS

Neil Young, *Sugar Mountain: Live at Canterbury House, 1968* (Reprise) After years and years (and years) of broken promises that Neil Young would be opening his archives up to his fans, and nearly on the eve of his long-promised, often-wished-for *Archives*, Young is giving his fans plenty to be excited about, not the least of which is the latest in a series of archival live albums, this one a solo acoustic performance from 1968.

Some of the best moments on this set are found in the between song chatter. "I wish I brought a comb tonight," Young says, before explaining, rather oddly, "This is the longest my hair has ever been. It really is. I'm gonna let it grow and grow and grow and grow."

Yeah, it's really nothing more than some off-the-cuff hippified chatter, but it goes a long way towards revealing the innocence of Young back when he was just starting out on his long career path. At the time, he was just another kid with a guitar, thinking about things like growing his hair long.

Then again, there are also some glimpses of what Young was heading for, as he lets slip little tidbits about his songwriting process here and there.

Of course, this is a Neil Young record and the songs are just as much at the centre of the world here as they are anytime he picks up a guitar. There's a riveting take on "Mr Soul," which grinds along ominously as Young pedals through the song's chords; a lengthy journey through "The Last Trip to Tulsa," where Young commands the room with verse after

verse whispered and cracking in his trembling voice; and a warbling, edging on out of tune take on "Nowadays Clancy Can't Even Sing."

"Nowadays Clancy Can't Even Sing" is followed by Young tuning his guitar up while rambling out another rap that is either hilarious or evidence that he's imbibed something or other before the performance.

Sugar Mountain: Live at Canterbury House, 1968 is an aging recording, put down with just two tracks several

decades ago, so the sound is far from pristine. There's plenty of hiss, but that's not likely to spoil the experience for anyone interested in time-tripping with Young, who ranks up near the top of the list in the bootleg-trading community.

In fact, the less-than-studio-perfect sound quality here does much to enhance the experience, capturing the time perfectly—not many bands were bringing full-on mobile studios to their coffee-shop gigs in '68.

And that's really what this album is about: capturing a time that is long gone, transporting the listener to a place that will never exist again and letting them in on a little bit of the creative process and evolution that has led Young to the place he is at today, where the man still records and releases music on his own schedule.

Young himself seems to be well aware of the fact that these archival releases are for the fans—and the historians among them—and that there's no reason to be scared by a little coughing in the background, or an out-of-tune lyric. It's simply about capturing the moment. —EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuweekly.com



Economics, *Economics* (Independent) It's perhaps a bit of a stretch to call *Economics*, the self-titled, self-produced one-man album by multi-instrumentalist Dean Summach, a "new sound," seeing as how it was completely back in August.

But in the wonderful world of DIY, which Summach clearly embraces, it's just recently made its way to us from Summach's home in Saskatoon. The CD, a collection of a dozen surprisingly layered and lush instrumental tracks, sounds more like the result of an extensive collaboration than a single musician. The songs start simply, with a single instrument breaking the silence, and then build layering instrument after instrument until the listener is immersed in a floating crescendo of sound that seems all the more rich because of the simplicity it sprang from. A CD may be tricky to track down, but you can listen download or buy it at economicsmusic.com. —SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vuweekly.com

Valery Gore, *Avalanche To Wandering Bear* (Do Right Music) There's no shortage of Tori Amos-esque singer/songwriters out there tickling the ivories these days, but Toronto's Valery Gore's latest, the self-produced *Avalanche To Wandering Bear*, is

just unique enough to rise above the rest. The combination of Gore's jazz-influenced piano, sweetly soothing voice and honestly quirky lyrics that don't get too navel-gazey combine to make an eminently listenable album. Thankfully there's enough variety here to keep the album interesting without seeming scattered, from the jaunty opener "Shoes or Glass" to the horns of "Worried Head" and the jazzy electronic piano of "Scared." All together, it's a strong and enjoyable sophomore offering from a talented musician who's only getting better with time. —SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vuweekly.com

Mudvayne, *The New Game* (Epic) Going a bit too far into mainstream territory, *The New Game* might make some Mudvayne fans want to pick up their toys and go home. From the very beginning of the record, the band sets a hard-rocking pace that only lets up briefly for the surprisingly moving "Scarlet Letters."

But on the whole, *The New Game* has only three tracks that are reminiscent of Mudvayne's earlier work ("A New Game," "Dull Boy," "We the People"). Some of the other tracks on the album still hearken back to the glory days with a ferocious scream or some heavy guitar riffs here and there, but the overall mood is spinelessly brooding rather than daringly angry. —SONYA SOLOMONOVICH / sonya@vuweekly.com



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03. fight on, your time ain't long v/a	08. buddha machine 2 0 fm3
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VUEWEEKLY

Nachoff—Bruno Toccane
 net, 5 New Dreams (Cristal
 nds) A quintet with four wind
 instruments and
 one drummer, the
 Quinsin Nachoff—
 Bruno Toccane
 Project is a group
 intent on pushing
 the boundaries of
 what it calls

"bellious music." Drawing members
 different continents, the group
 takes work that is spare, lively, some-
 es dissonant and sometimes
 melodic, but always with a sense of
 ay and fun. Not necessarily party
 sic, but not necessarily out of place
 a party (depending on who you
 site), the Nachoff—Toccane Project's
 New Dreams is worth listening to.

Subhumans, Death Was Too Kind
 (Alternative Tentacles) While the
 Subhumans were one of the seminal
 bands of the
 Vancouver punk
 scene in the late-
 '70s and early
 '80s, releases from
 those days have
 been notoriously
 difficult to find.

The latest in Alternative Tentacles'
 "e-issues of necessity" series, *Death
 Was Too Kind* brings together 10 rari-
 recorded between '78 and '81,
 including the band's first seven-inch,
 "Death to the Sickoids" and "Oh
 naduh," and a reissue of the epony-
 mous '79 EP, which includes the clas-
 ics "Fuck You," which is often mistak-
 enly thought of as a DOA original, and
 "Slave To My Dick." The *Firing Squad*
 even-inch and two tracks recorded
 st before Gerry Useless quit the band
 go blow shit up instead of just
 singing about it, and which never
 ade it onto a Subhumans record,
 round out the offerings. —SCOTT HARRIS /
 scott@vuwweekly.com

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MON-FRI

VUEWEEKLY

MUSIC
OLD SOUNDS
 (COVER STORY)
 old@vuwweekly.com

The Band, *The Last Waltz* (Warner Bros) Originally released: 1978 It was 30 years ago that the Band's first swan song, *The Last Waltz*, was released. (The group would go on to another life without principal songwriter Robbie Robertson, resulting in new music, but would ultimately fade into nothing with the death of bass player Rick Danko in 1999.)

Forty years ago in July saw the release of the band's debut, *Music From Big Pink*. With recording for *The Last Waltz* taking place during the Band's November 25, 1976 farewell concert, the time between the two albums was a mere eight years, but there's a world of difference between them.

When *Music From Big Pink* was recorded, the Band had already been a band for a decade, working as Bob Dylan's band for several years and as Ronnie Hawkins' Hawks before that. So when the players summoned up their creative energies and put them to tape on their own record, they were already a tight unit, able to share the vocals and just about every other instrument in order to give a song whatever it needed, and that unity was apparent in the spontaneity on *Music From Big Pink*.

But by 1976, that sense that the players were living in the moment as a group was all but gone. That's not to say that the live performances on *The Last Waltz* sound like a bunch of amateurs running any which way they can; quite the opposite, actually. By the time of *The Last Waltz*, the Band knew its game, knew exactly how to accomplish everything it wanted to do, right down to an ability to lay off the mic



when someone wanted to mimic the fading of a voice on a recorded version of one of their songs.

There's a hint of showboating hanging overhead as the Band troops out guest after guest to pay tribute in both directions. Granted, everyone on the stage seems genuinely touched, but there's an unfortunate theatrical vibe that comes along with so many participants, and the results are often disappointing when they should be anything but. Neil Young's appearance for a take on his own "Helpless" is a prime exam-

ple, with the Band wandering about the song, as everyone involved falls into a bland sing-a-long, as does Bob Dylan and company on "Forever Young."

Still, there are some remarkable moments to be found here: "The Night They Drove Old Dixie

Down" features a heartwrenching vocal from drummer Levon Helm, and pianist Richard Helm dips into the same well on "The Shape I'm In."

As for the guests, Van Morrison puts everything he has into his turn and Bob Dylan owns the stage during a ragged rendition of "Baby, Let Me Follow You Down."

Perhaps the most troublesome aspect of *The Last Waltz* is that it simply cannot be distanced from its role as the soundtrack to Martin Scorsese's film of the same name, documenting both the performance and the performers in interview segments that do much to shine a light on the road weary exasperation that the Band—and Robertson primarily—felt, as well as the loss that was already beginning to haunt the individual members as the group began to split and each was left to find his own way. It is an impressive document showing just where this version of the Band ultimately ended up. ▽

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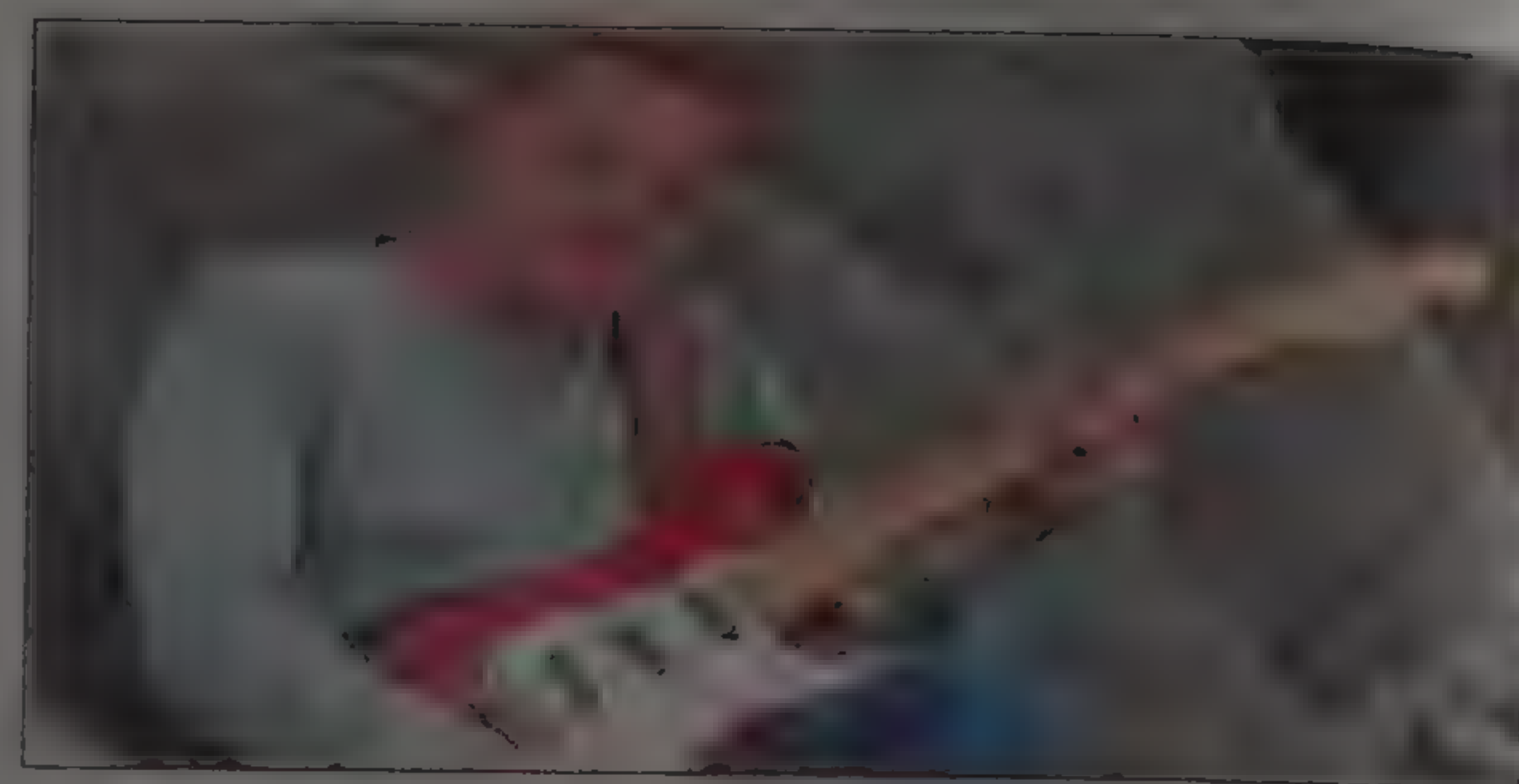
BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vancouverweekly.com

One of the most striking aspects of Bobby Cameron is his versatility. As a performer, Cameron can play to any kind of venue, with a full band, by himself, with just a few musicians or even just a drummer, and he has enough material that he can keep any kind of crowd happy. As a songwriter, Cameron can write in a variety of styles, from his rock and folk tinged work on three solo albums, to the writing he's done for Canadian Idol winner Ryan Malcolm and R&B singer Jullie Black. Not only is he versatile, he's pretty busy too.

This Friday's Blue Chair gig will be of the solo acoustic variety, a type of show that offers some advantages for audience members explains Cameron.

"The intensity's the same but you really get inside of the song more and you can actually hear the essence of the song cause everything else is cleared away," he says. "When you're solo like that everything gets more exposed, and I guess it really gives the listener an intimate version of your trip."

Excited to be performing live in his hometown of Edmonton, Cameron has spent much of the past few years writing for others. A different perspective on the music biz, being a hired gun was often a challenge for Cameron, something he says he enjoyed immensely, but not as much as performing.



PREVIEW FRI, DEC 5 (8 PM)
BOBBY CAMERON
BLUE CHAIR

"For most of my career I was just an artist really going for it and when I wrote, I wrote for myself. When I ended up with a publishing deal and for five straight years co-writing with other people, it was different. I would go into a room with four or five songwriters and we were writing with someone particular in mind and I never wrote like that before because whenever I wrote I just wrote when I felt I had something to say for myself and I'd only write something I'd actually be able to sing and play with a context or a lyric I really

believed in," he explains. "So this is really different—it took me a while to get into that because it's almost like I was going into a drive thru to get a song written."

EVEN THOUGH HE spent a lot of time writing for others, nothing could have stopped Cameron writing for himself. In fact, he has an album ready to go by early next year.

"I've actually got one in the can right now that I've been massaging for the last year and a half and over the last few years I've been so busy working with other people that I kind of put it on hold," he says excitedly. "I'm just putting on some final touches and then I'm gonna find a mixing engineer to mix it." ▼

ZODIAC FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

freewill@vancouverweekly.com

ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 19)

The European Union has had rules banning the sale of ugly carrots with knobby protrusions, cucumbers that are grossly curved, and equally unaesthetic specimens of 24 other fruits and vegetables. Recently that changed, however. The stiff standards were relaxed. "It makes no sense to throw perfectly good products away, just because they are the 'wrong' shape," said the EU's commissioner for agriculture. I suggest you make a metaphorically similar shift, Aries. It's time for you to expand your capacity to welcome some fine, useful things that happen to look a bit imperfect.

TAURUS (APR 20 - MAY 20)

In the Broadway play "Passing Strange," the narrator praises the healing power of mysterious songs, saying, "You know when the music goes right over your head, bypasses your mind, and strengthens the part of you that's most beautiful?" That's the kind of nourishment I encourage you to seek out in the coming week, Taurus. You need soul-toning experiences that elude your rational understanding—encounters with wise animals, waking dreams, unpredictable love, exotic music and twilight whispers that blissfully boggle your imagination.

GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUN 20)

According to the imaginative reporters at the *Weekly World News*, the devil doesn't sit by passively as people beseech God for help and consolation. Using his own version of stealth

technology, the evil one "intercepts or jams" up to one-third of all prayers on their way heavenward. Timid and fuzzy prayers are the easiest for him to block. Just in case there's a grain of truth in this claim, Gemini, take special measures when you send out appeals for assistance in the coming days. You need and deserve attention from higher powers, both the earthbound and divine kind. To ensure that the devil (or one of his surrogates) can't interfere, formulate your messages concisely and communicate them with crisp confidence.

CANCER (JUN 21 - JUL 22)

Lame-duck US President George Bush is mostly dreaming of his retirement these days, although he takes time out now and then to create executive orders that undo environmental protections. Barack Obama is planning hard for the monumental recovery he hopes to lead when he assumes the presidency, but his time won't come until January 20. Meanwhile, all the things that have been falling apart under Bush's watch are continuing to fall apart, only bigger and badder. Writes Josh Marshall on talkingpointsmemo.com, "We're paying mightily for having no captain at the helm at one of the most perilous points in our recent national history." In regard to your own personal life, Cancerian, please avoid acting like America. Don't wait for some formal deadline before you make your moves. Expedite the transition from the old order to the new with the force of a thousand ecstatic activists.

LEO (JUL 23 - AUG 22)

"It's better to be clumsy than clever," says an ancient Chinese book called *Poets' Jade Splinters*, "better plain than affected, better crude than weak, better eccentric than vulgar." That's a good prescription for you to use

in the way you live your life in the coming days, Leo. Here's another observation from the same text that should also be helpful: "Inspiration enters at the border between hard work and laziness." That suggests you've got to work hard and discipline yourself in order to earn the right to inspiration, but often the inspiration flows in when you're goofing off or giving yourself some slack.

VIRGO (AUG 23 - SEP 22)

In 1952, renowned modern composer John Cage created the infamous "4'33"." It's a "song" that consists of four minutes and 33 seconds of pure silence. Recently a San Francisco performance artist, Jonathon Keats, did a remix of that tune and made it available as a ring-tone. I'd love for you to be inspired by those two geniuses in the coming week, Virgo. It'll be an excellent time for you to come to a perfect stop, fill yourself with stillness, and bask in the healing power of undiluted nothingness.

LIBRA (SEP 23 - OCT 22)

I urge you not to Google the word "duh," Libra. If you do, you'll mark yourself as a conformist trend-slave, joining over 33 million people who have already done it before you. Furthermore, you will be in danger of wasting the potential the cosmos is offering you, which is to reap rich rewards by exploring brave new frontiers on the edges of your awareness. So please be insanely curious about stuff you've never heard of and people you've never met. Research subjects that tantalize your imagination and stick your nose in where it supposedly doesn't belong. But don't Google "duh."

SCORPIO (OCT 23 - NOV 21)

Researchers have determined that you've

got longer than you imagine to salvage food that has dropped on the floor. Bacteria don't get a foothold and start growing on your pizza or muffin for at least 30 seconds. Keep that in mind as an all-purpose metaphor in the coming days, Scorpio. Anything that you fear has already been spoiled or tainted may actually be possible to restore and redeem. You probably have more time than you thought.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV 22 - DEC 21)

I got an invitation through MySpace to audition for an upcoming production of the "Vagina Monologues." While I was honoured to be asked, I wasn't sure that the kind of audience members who would come to see the "Vagina Monologues" would want to hear me, a man, expound on the central topic. Upon reading the fine print, however, I found out that the producers were indeed seeking some male actors. The metaphorical moral of the story, Sagittarius, is to be open to invitations, opportunities, and requests that may at first seem odd, misdirected, or irrelevant.

CAPRICORN (DEC 22 - JAN 19)

From 1987 to 2006, Alan Greenspan was Chairman of the US Federal Reserve and a major force in shaping the world's most powerful economy. When the recent troubles hit, Congress called on him to testify. With shocking humility, he confessed that there had been a flaw in his model of reality. All those years he'd believed that "free, competitive markets are by far the unrivaled way to organize economies." Now he saw he was wrong. While I'm sorry for the collective pain his mistaken ideas have unleashed, I'm elated for him personally: how many 82-year-old men are open to the possibility that their philosophy of

life needs adjustment? For that matter, how many people of any age are receptive to changing their ideas about how the world works? I invite you to take your inspiration from Greenspan, Capricorn. Be curious about how your own major theories might need revision. Doing this heroic deed will energize you with good karma and fresh mojo.

AQUARIUS (JAN 20 - FEB 18)

What's the healthiest, holiest rebellion you could launch, Aquarius? What would be the most constructive way to channel your longing to live in a more perfect world? How might you overthrow the status quo in way that would so thoroughly enhance the greater good that even the people bent on preserving the status quo would benefit? Given the fact that you are in a phase when your troubleshooting skills are dovetailing very nicely with your ability to bestow blessings, these are excellent questions for you to consider.

PISCES (FEB 19 - MAR 20)

A column in the *Washington Post* called "The Style Invitational" has identified the "Top 10 New Religions." I'm calling your attention to two that might be attractive to you in the coming months, a time when you'll probably have urges to transform and expand upon your spiritual practices. First, there are the Oxyormons, who engage in polygamous monogamy. The second group is the Salvationists. They speak in tongues like some other sects, but they also speak in drool. A third option, of course, is for you to whip up your own brand new, totally unique religion using just the parts you really like from all of the other traditions. However you do it, Pisces, I encourage you to be playfully creative as you get more disciplined about your relationship with the Divine Wow. ▼

EVENTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 780.426.2889 or e-mail Glens at Glens@vuwweekly.com Deadline is Friday at 3 pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

AIKIKAI AIKIDO CLUB 10139-87 Ave., Old Strathcona Community League, www.alberta-aikido.org/ednaikikai/ • Japanese Martial Art at Aikido • Every Tue 7:30-9:30pm; Thu 6-8pm

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL—WRITE FOR RIGHTS 780.462.1871 • Global write-a-thon celebrating the 60th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights at Second Cup (Jasper Ave and 118 St) 11am-3pm; Steeps (11116-82 Ave) 1-4pm; Earth's General Store (2 Fl, 10832-82 Ave) 1-4pm; after service at Dayspring Presbyterian, St George's Anglican, Southminster-Steinhauer United, Knox Metropolitan United, St Thomas D'Arquie, Sun, Dec 7 • Bilingual write-a-thon at Campus Saint-Jean, 8406-91 St, 10am-1:30pm; Sat, Dec 6

AWA 12-STEP SUPPORT GROUP Braeside Presbyterian Church basement, N. door, 6 Bernard Dr, Bishop St, Sir Winston Churchill Ave, St. Albert • For adult children of alcoholic and dysfunctional families • Meet Mondays including holidays, 7:30pm

CANADIAN NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE 11205-101 St, 780.479.1999 • Basketball; Mon (5-7pm) • Healing Circle; Mon (6-8pm) • Boxing; Mon/Thu (7-9pm), Tue (5-7pm) • Volleyball; Tue (6-8pm) • Sewing Circle; Tue (6-8pm) • Beadwork Class; Wed (6-8pm) • C.N.F.C. Pow-wow; Wed (6-9pm) • Hip-Hop Class; every Thu (5-7pm) • Cree Class; Thu (6-8pm) • Elders and Residency; Fri (all day) • Safe Using and Harm Reduction; last Fri each month (11am-12pm) • Tobacco Reduction; every Fri (1-2pm) • Drop-in Night; Fri (6-8pm)

CHESS Edmonton Chess Club and Society of Alberta Chess Knights, 780.474.2318 • Learn to play chess; opportunities for all ages including classes, school programs and tournaments • rovingchessnuts@shaw.ca

CLUB DU SOLEIL SINGLES DANCE South East Edmonton Seniors Centre, 9350-82 St, www.clubdusoleil.com, 780.988.4144 • Sat, Dec 6; free dance lessons 8-9pm; Dance 9pm-1am • \$8 (member)/\$13 (guest)

DESIGN IN A COLD CLIMATE LECTURE SERIES Grant MacEwan College, 5th Street Building, Room 5-142, 780.668.3482, www.madeinedmonton.org • Featuring speaker Klaus Mayer of Mayer Sattler-Smith, a multi-disciplinary design firm that is responsive to conditions of Alaskan climate • Dec 10, 7-10pm • \$5 (MADE member)/\$10 (non-member) at the door

EDMONTON BICYCLE COMMUTERS BikeWorks 10047-80 Ave, back alley entrance, www.edmontonbikes.ca • Winter Cycling: Bicycle Tire Studding Session • Thu, Dec 4, 6:30-9pm • \$5 (studs and tire lining for your own tire) /\$10-\$20 (good quality used tire with studs)

EDMONTON ESPERANTO SOCIETY Rm 1812, 10025-102A Ave, 780.702.5117 • Fri, noon-1pm • vaughn@sewardconsulting.com

FREE FAMILY ART NIGHTS Nina Haggerty Centre, 9702-111 Ave • For Parents and children up to 17, materials, instruction and a light snack are free • Every Thu, 6:30-8pm

GREAT EXPEDITIONS HOSTEL TRAVEL SLIDE SCHEDULE Hostelling International, 10647-81 Ave (780.454.6216/780.455.6741) • Meet the 2nd Mon every month, 7:30pm • Free • Christmas potluck, bring drinks and potluck dish • Mon, Dec 8, 6:30pm

HERITAGE VALLEY ROADRUNNERS Second Cup, Ellerslie Rd, 111 St • A new group for runners • Every Sun, 8:30am • Info email drcaul@shaw.ca

IMAGES ALBERTA CAMERA CLUB Pleasantview Community Hall, 10860-57 Ave, 780.469.9776/780.452.6224 • Featuring presentations, speakers, workshops, outings, and competitions. All levels of photographers welcome • Meet the 2nd and 4th Thu each month; Sept-May, 8pm; Dec has only the one meeting on the 2nd Thu • www.imagesab.com

INSIDE/OUT SPEAKERS' SERIES 7-152, 7th Fl, Education North Bldg, U of A • Presentation:

Behind the Curtain: Understanding Physical Transition and The Truth Behind Politics, Policy Development, and Its Impact Within Elite Sport • Thu, Dec 4, 5-6pm; open reception for Kristen Worley following the presentation at Play night-club 6:30-9:30pm

MEDITATION • Gaden Samten Ling Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Society: 11403-101 St, 780.479.0014, www.gadensamtenling.org; Kushok Lobsang Dhamchoe; beginner Tue, 7pm; intermediate Wed, 7pm; adv. Sun, 11am-1pm • **Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization,** 208, 10132-105 St, 780.425.1050, www.bkwsu.org; Raja Yoga Meditation • **Meditation and Buddhist practices** 10502-70 Ave, 780.633.6157, www.karmatashiling.ca; with Tibetan tradition, Lama Ani Kunsang. Beginners welcome, instruction available; Wed, 7pm; free

MORDOR CLIMATE MARCH South End of Canada Place, 9700 Jasper Ave • Marching to the Alberta Legislature. Part of the protests that will take place across Canada as part of a global mobilization to stop the climate crisis • Sun, Dec 7, 12pm

SUGAR SWING DANCE CLUB Orange Hall, 10335-84 Ave, 780.604.7572, www.sugar-swing.com • Jitterbug Swing Dance; Dec 6, beginner lesson 8pm, dance 9pm-12am • Jitterbug Swing Dance; Dec 13, beginner lesson 8pm, dance 9pm-12am

THOUGHTFUL TUESDAY DOCUMENTARY Steeps Tea Lounge College Plaza, 11116-82 Ave, 11116 82 Ave, 780.988.8105 • Film/documentary series featuring *Sustainable Table* • Tue, Dec 9, 7pm • Free

THOUGHTFUL TUESDAY DOCUMENTARY Steeps Tea Lounge College Plaza, 11116-82 Ave, 11116 82 Ave, 780.988.8105 • Film/documentary series featuring *Buyer Be Fair* • Tue, Dec 16, 7pm

TOASTMASTERS CLUBS • Chamber Toastmasters Club: Chamber of Commerce, 600, 9990 Jasper Ave, 780.459.5206; Thu, 6pm • **MacEwan:** Grant MacEwan College, Rm 7-297E, 10700-104 Ave, 780.633.3921; Fri, noon-1pm • **N'Orators Toastmasters Club:** Londonderry Public Library, www.norators.com; Wed, 7-8:45pm • **Norwood Toastmasters Club:** Kingsway Legion, 10425 Kingsway Ave, 780.456.3934, www.norwoodtoastmasters.org; Thu, 8-10pm • **Power Speakers:** Grant MacEwan Centre for the Arts, Rm 437, 10045-156 St, 780.459.0542; Wed, 7-9pm • **Pursuers:** Best Western Cedar Park Inn, 5116 Gateway Boulevard, 780.457.0808; Wed, 7-9pm • **Chanticleer:** Kingsway Rm, Millard Health Building, 131 Airport Rd, 780.498.4608/780.474.1138; Thu, 7-8:30am • **Upward Bound:** Rm 601 Norquest College 10215-108St, 780.488.4098/780.454.3720, adamskr@telus.net, Wed, 7-8:30pm

VEGETARIANS OF ALBERTA Riverdale Community Hall, 9231-100 Ave, www.vofa.ca • Holiday Potluck: Bring a homemade vegetarian, vegan or raw vegan dish for 6 people, your own plate and utensils. Bring decorations if you want • Sun, Dec 14, 5:30pm • \$3 (VOA member)/\$5 (non-member)/free (youth 12 and under)

WHAT WOULD JESUS BUY? Zeidler Hall, Citadel Theatre, 9828-101A Ave, 780.425.9212 • Docu-comedy presented by Theatre Yes and Edmonton Small Press Association along with *Workers of the World Relax!* • Thu, Dec 4, 7pm, 9pm • \$8 (donation, sliding scale)

WOMEN IN BLACK In front of the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market • Silent vigil the 1st and 3rd Sat, 10-11am, each month, stand in silence for a world without violence

QUEER LISTINGS

AFFIRM SUNNYBROOK—RED DEER Sunnybrook United Church, Red Deer, 403.347.6073 • Affirm welcome LGBTQ people and their friends, family, and allies meet the 2nd Tue, 7pm, each month

BOOTS BAR AND LOUNGE 10242-106 St, 780.423.5014, www.bootsbar.ca • 2nd Thu: Illusions Social Club • 3rd Wed: Edmonton O Society • 2nd Tue: Edmonton Rainbow Business Association • Every Fri: Philosophy Café • Fri and Sat DJ Sexxy Sean 10-3 • Long Weekend Sundays feature the Stardust Lounge with Miss Bianca and Vanity Fair

BUDDYS NITE CLUB 11725B Jasper Ave, 780.488.7736 • Open nightly 9pm-3am, Fri 8-3pm • Sun: Rotating drag shows with Mz Bianca and Mz Vanity Fair in The Stardust

Lounge and GoDiva and Donnatella NE1 in The GoDonna Show, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Mon: Amateur strip contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Tue: Free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser • Wed: Hump day with DJ Sexxy Sean • Thu: Wet underwear contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Fri: We made 'em famous! DJ Eddy Toonflash, come early to avoid lineup, no cover before 10pm • Sat: Undie night for men only, free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser

EDMONTON PRIME TIMERS (EPT) Unitarian Church of Edmonton, 10804-119 St • A group of older gay men and their admirers who have common social interests meet the 2nd Sun, 2:30pm, of most months for a social period, a short meeting and a guest speaker, discussion panel or a potluck supper. Special interest groups meet for other social activities throughout the month. email edmontonpt@yahoo.ca, www.primetimerswww.org/edmonton

GLBT SPORTS AND RECREATION www.teamedmonton.ca • Women's Drop-In Recreational Badminton; Oliver School Gym, 10227-118 St, 780.465.3620; Wed, 6-7:30pm • Bootcamp; Lynnwood Elementary School at 15451-84 Ave; Mon, 7-8:15pm; bootcamp@teamedmonton.ca • Bowling; Gateway Lanes, 100, 3414 Gateway Blvd; Sat, 5-7pm; bowling@teamedmonton.ca • Curling; Mon, 7:15-9:15pm, Granite Curling Club; 780.463.5942 • Running; Sun, Tue, Thu; running@teamedmonton.ca • Swimming; NAIT pool, 11762-106 St; Tue, 8-9pm, Thu, 7:30-8:30pm; swimming@teamedmonton.ca • Volleyball; Tue Recreational: Mother Teresa Elementary School at 9008-105A, 8-10pm; Thu intermediate: Amiskiwaciy Academy, 101 Airport Rd, 8-10pm; recvolleyball@teamedmonton.ca, volleyball@teamedmonton.ca • YOGA (Hatha): Free Yoga; every Sun, 2-3:30pm; Korezone Fitness, 203, 10575-115 St.; yoga@teamedmonton.ca

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB Boots, 10242-106 St, 780.387.3343 • Crossdressers, transsexuals, friends and supporters meet 2nd Thu each month http://groups.yahoo.com/group/edmonton_illusions/

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • 3rd Thu each month (fall/winter terms): Speakers Series. Contact Kris (kvells@ualberta.ca)

KOREZONE FITNESS 203, 10575-115 St • **LIVING POSITIVE** 404, 10408-124 St, www.edmlivingpositive.ca, 1.877.975.9448/780.488.5768, • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Tue, 7-9pm: Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

MADELEINE SANAM FOUNDATION Faculté St Jean, Rm 3-18, 780.490.7332 • Program for HIV-AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • 3rd and 4th Sat, 9am-5pm each month • Free (member)/\$10 (membership) • Pre-register

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue, Thu

PFLAG Pride Centre, 9540-111 Ave • A support group for parents and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people • Meet the 1st Wed each month September-June, 7-9pm; T: Ruby 780.436.1998 after 6pm; E: edmontonab@pflagcanada.ca

PLAY NIGHTCLUB 10220-103 St, www.playnightclub.ca • Open Thu, Fri, Sat • The first bar for the queer community to open in a decade with DJs Alexx Brown and Eddie Toonflash

PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON 9540-111 Ave, 780.488.3234, www.pridecentreofedmonton.org • Open Tue-Fri 1-10pm, Sat 2-6:30pm • LGBT Seniors Drop-in: Every Tue/Thu, 2-4pm • CA: Every Thu (7pm) • Suit Up and Show Up: AA big book study group meet every Sat, noon • Youth Understanding Youth: Youth up to 25 years, support and social group meet every Sat, 7-9pm; yuy@shaw.ca • Womenspace: Board meeting 1st Sun each month, 10:30am-12:30pm • Trans Education/Support Group: Meet the 1st and 3rd Sun, 2-4pm, of each month; www.albertatrans.org • Men Talking with Pride: Every Sun

(7pm); facilitator: Rob Wells robwells780@hotmail.com • HIV Support Group: Meet the 2nd Mon of each month, 7pm • Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex and Questioning (TTIQ) Alliance: Support meeting the 2nd Tue each month, 7:30pm • Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex and Questioning. Education, advocacy and support for men, women and youth; PFLAG Edmonton: Meet the 1st Wed each month, 7pm • Free short-term, solution-focused drop-in counseling; every Wed, 7-10pm • YouthSpace: drop-in for LGBTQ for youth up to 25; Tue-Sat, 3-7pm

ROBERTSON-WESLEY UNITED CHURCH 10209-123 St, 780.482.1587, www.rwuc.org • Soul OUTing: an LGBT-focused alternative worship • 3rd Sun each month, 7pm; worship Sun, 10:30am; people of all sexual orientations welcome. A LGBT monthly book club and a bi-monthly film night. Info email jravenscroft@rwuc.org

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH 11526-76 Ave, 780.436.1555 • People of all sexual orientations are welcome • Every Sun (10am worship)

WOMONSPACE 780.482.1794, www.womonspace.ca, womonspace@gmail.com • A Non-profit lesbian social organization for Edmonton and surrounding area. Organized monthly activities from dances, games nites, golf tournament, etc. Monthly newsletter and reduced rates included with membership. Confidentiality assured

WOODY'S 11723 Jasper Ave, 780.488.6557 • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Tue Karaoke with Tizzy and Patrick • Sat-Sun Pool Tournaments

SPECIAL EVENTS

ALBERTA LEGISLATURE 10829-98 Ave, www.assembly.ab.ca • Christmas Light-up: Dec 4, 4pm • Voices in the Rotunda: Through to Dec 23 • Winter Wonderland: Ice sculptures; starting Dec 4 • Events in the Peway: Craft table for kids, displays by local schools; through to Dec 23

BRIGHTNIGHTS Hawrelak Park, www.edmontonchamber.com • Until Jan 4, 5-10pm

CHANGE FOR CHILDREN ASSOCIATION 2 Fl, 10808-124 St, www.changeforchildren.org, 780.448.1505 • Holiday Open House • Fri, Dec 5, 5-11pm

ETS CHRISTMAS LIGHTS TOURS Leave from City Hall (south side) on 102A Ave • Edmonton Transit System tours visit Bright Nights in Hawrelak Park, the Legislative Grounds for lights, carolers and hot chocolate. The buses are wheelchair accessible • Dec 15-21, Mon-Fri depart: 6pm, 6:15pm and 6:30pm; Sat, Sun depart: 5:30pm and 5:45pm • \$3 (each)

JOHN HUMPHREY CENTRE FOR PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS Grand Salon, Pavillon Lacerte, Campus St Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne-Gaboury St, 780.453.2638, www.jhccentre.org, www.humanrightscity.ca • Human Rights Awards, featuring speaker Michael Phair • Dec 10, 6:30pm (door), 7pm (program) • \$5 (adv)/\$8 (door)

LUMINARIA 2008 Devonian Botanic Garden, 780.987.3054 ext 2223, www.devonian.ualberta.ca • Thousands of candles will light the paths of the Kurimoto Japanese Garden, there will be hot apple cider, bonfires, strolling singers, handmade natural crafts, memory lane • Sun, Dec 7, 5-9pm • \$9 (adult)/\$5 (child 6-12)/free for child 5 and under

A CHRISTMAS PAST SPECIAL EVENT Rutherford House Provincial, 11153 Saskatchewan Dr, 780.427.3995 • Christmas carollers, a festive craft, homemade apple cider • Sun, Dec 7; Sun, Dec 14, noon-4pm

SANTA SHUFFLE FUN RUN AND ELF WALK Hawerlak Park • Sat, Dec 6, 10am • Fundraiser, helps the Salvation Army to assist families and individuals in need during the Christmas season, www.santashuffle.com

SHARE THE SPIRIT 9808-148 St • Pilgrims Hospice Society open house celebrate an old fashioned Christmas with live entertainment, a festive meal, the Festival of Wreaths • Sun, Dec 7, 11:15am-2pm

A VINYL CAFÉ CHRISTMAS Jubilee Auditorium • With Stuart McLean Don Jones Productions • Dec 7

COMEDY

COMEDY FACTORY Gateway Entertainment Centre, 34th Ave, Calgary Trail • Thu, 8:30pm;

Sat, 8pm and 10pm • Steven Juliano Moore; Dec 4-6 • Chris Warren; Dec 11-13 • Leif Skyving; Dec 18-20

COMIC STRIP Bourbon St, WEM, 780.483.5999, www.thecomicstrip.ca • Hit or Miss Mondays: Each Mon • Alternative Tuesdays: Each Tue • John Ray; until Dec 7 • Butch Bradley; Dec 10-14; \$15 • Tom Wilson Special Concert Presentation; Dec 17-21

THE LAUGH SHOP 1105-6606 137 Ave, Londonderry Mall, 780.476.1010, www.the-laughshop.ca • Wed-Sat 8pm; Fri-Sat 8pm and 10:30pm • Wed amateur night; 8pm • Brian Lazanik; Dec 4-6 • John Wing; Dec 9-13 • Dave Nystrom; Dec 16-20

KARAOKE

BLIND PIG 32 St. Anne Street, St. Albert, 780.418.6332 • Tue, Wed, Fri: Karaoke with Shelly

BILLY BOB'S SPORTS BAR Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd, 780.484.7751 • Wed 8pm-12am, Thu, Fri, Sat 9:30pm-1:30am: With Almost Famous

BO DIDDLY'S—NW (ROADHOUSE) 142 St, 118 Ave • Sat 10pm-2am: with Gord's Ultimate Karaoke show

CAMPUS SPORTS BAR 10807-106 Ave, 780.420.1530 • Karaoke night: Tue and Fri 9pm-1am, hosted by Brian Olson • Saturday night: DJ Hip hop

CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB 37 Millbourne Rd 780.462.6565 • Tue (9pm): with Sonia/Prosound

CROWN AND ANCHOR 15277 Castledowns Rd, 780.472.7696 • Thu 10:30pm • Wed: Name that Tune

DRUID 11606 Jasper Ave • Wed nights: with Gary from Mr. Entertainment

ECCO PUB 9605-66 Ave, 780.435.5050 • Sat 9pm-1am

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St, 780.488.4841 • Tue, Wed 9pm-1:30am: Gord's Best Live Singing Show

HAWKEYES TOO 10044-102 St, 780.421.9898 • Fri, Sat 8pm-midnight: Hot Karaoke Productions

HOOLIGANZ PUB 10704-124 St, 780.452.1168 • Fri: Karaoke with Knista, Liquid Entertainment

INGLEWOOD PUB 12402-118 Ave, 780.451.1390 • Thu, hosted by Gordon; Fri: hosted by Shawna; Sat: hosted by Jolly Greg Grant, 9:30pm-2am

JASPER PLACE HOTEL 15326 Stony Plain Rd, 780.489.1906 • Mon 7-11pm

KNIGHTS PUB SOUTH 1919-105 St, 780.461.0587 • Fri 10pm-2am: Gord's Best Live Singing Show

MAZADAR 10725-104 Ave, 780.429.4940 • Fri 5pm-late: with Chris

MONA LISA'S PUB 9606-118 Ave, 780.477.7752 • Thu, Fri, Sat: sound and songs with great hosts

NEWCASTLE PUB 6108-90 Ave, 780.490.1999 • Thu

NEW WEST HOTEL 15025-111 Ave, 780.489.2511 • Sun 3-7pm

O'CONNOR'S IRISH PUB 9013-88 Ave, 780.465.4834 • Thu 8pm: Terra with Mr. Entertainment

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL • Downtown, 10604-101 St, 780.423.3499 • Mon-Sat 9pm; Sun 7pm: with Ruth • Highstreet, 10315-124 St, 780.482.1600; daily 9:30pm • Old Strathcona, 10475-80 Ave, 780.439.7211; Thu-Sat 9:30pm-1:30am • 99 St, 63 Ave; Thu-Sat 9pm-1am: with Off-Key Entertainment

SHERLOCK HOLMES 1650 WEM • Karaoke Industry Night Sundays: Terra with Mr. Entertainment; 9pm-2am • Rock Band Mondays: Terra with Mr. Entertainment, play for fun, all skill levels; 8pm start

SIDELINERS PUB 11018-127 St, 780.453.6006 • Thu/Sat 9pm-2am: with Shelley

SPORTSWORLD INLINE AND ROLLER SKATING DISCO 13710-104 St, 780.472.6336 • Karaoke evenings: Tue/Fri/Sat 7-10:30pm • Karaoke afternoons: Sat/Sun 1-4:30pm

TAPHOUSE 9020 McKenney Ave, St. Albert, 780.458.0860 • Wed 9pm-1am: hosted by Beauty and the Beast

She's a femme fatale

1981
QUEERMONTON
TAMARA GORZALKA
tam@vuwweekly.com

Nan Kinney has been in the authentic lesbian porn business for 25 years. Until a little over a year ago, I had no idea that there was such a thing as authentic lesbian porn. I, like many people, thought girl-on-girl action was relegated to the rather personally repulsive domain of straight chicks going at it for the benefit of heterosexual males. I said as much in these pages, which is why the fine ladies over at Fatale Media sent over some of their titles for review.

I was shocked. This wasn't the pornography I grew up with. These were real women in real relationships doing the things that lesbians actually do. Beautiful and messy, filled with emotion and no bleached long hair, fake tits, freakishly long nails and high heels in sight.

Kinney is the president and founder of Fatale Media and the executive producer of all of Fatale's videos. In 1984 she co-founded *On Our Backs*, a magazine of lesbian erotica, to fill the void she and her friends had found when searching for representations of themselves in pornography.

Fatale's movies have been featured on American, Canadian and French specialty television channels and they've been covered in many mainstream publications. Fatale's most famous movie, ironically, is *Bend Over Boyfriend*. The video is a how-to for heterosexual couples making the foray into strap-ons. (Dan Savage likes to call that "pegging.") Fatale distributes for other women-owned porn companies and produces their own movies. Kinney runs the business with her partner of 10 years, Christine Cassidy.

With titles like *Dominatrix Waitrix*, *Turn Me Up*, *Over and On*, *Bathroom Sluts* and *Superfreak*, no one at Fatale is shy

about talking lesbian porn. I caught up with Kinney at work in California.

VUE WEEKLY: What title are you most excited about right now?

NAN KINNEY: *One Night Stand*. For quite a while now, one of my ambitions has been to broaden out the world of lesbian porn more globally, other than just based in the US and California, basically. When I found out about these gals in Paris doing lesbian porn, porn made by lesbians for lesbians, I was really excited. So I went "Send me a copy!" So they sent me a copy and I just love this movie. It's just one of my favourite all-time lesbian movies. I like the way it's shot. It's kind of, I don't know, garage-band shot. Kind of grainy, very realistic. Different performers in every scene, very good chemistry with them. You get the sense that it's in Paris, but they're not showing the Eiffel Tower every few minutes. They just did a wonderful job.

VW: What is the difference between girl/girl porn and lesbian porn?

NK: Well girl/girl porn's been around for a

long time. That's all we had when I came out. When we started *On Our Backs* magazine, it was because there wasn't anything that we as lesbians, trans or bi people could recognize ourselves in. Girl/girl porn—don't get me wrong, it's fine and I like looking at it sometimes—it's produced with a male viewer in mind. The women are usually pretty femme. It's kind of like femme on femme. Sometimes very high femme, like big hair, fake breasts, very fantastical looking. It just doesn't really portray what lesbians do, what I do in bed and my friends do in bed and the kind of sex that we have. It's very limited kind of sex in girl/girl porn. And you can kind of tell that the women aren't that into it. Usually they're straight or maybe they're bi but they're not really into it. You can really tell they're performing for the camera.

There's this whole other thing happening, so let's start making our own. When you look at authentic lesbian porn you're going to see a wider variety of women. You're going to see more masculine women, butch women, trans women. They're going to be having lots of differ-

ent kinds of sex, a little more intense. The connections between the women are usually more palpable because they're usually more into it, the sex is more believable than girl/girl porn—I think, anyway.

VW: And you sometimes use real couples in your movies, right?

NK: Yes, most of the people we work with are real couples. We don't usually work with mainstream porn stars. That's not our deal, our deal is to work with real life people. They're very generous to share themselves with us. I have always felt so thankful, it's very intimate. Working with real people, it's not a job. That's another difference between girl/girl porn and the more real lesbian sex stuff is, that's really them. They're not doing it for a job.

In part two of my interview in two weeks: transmen sex, the past and future of porn, women's relationship with pornography, lesbian video on demand, how making porn is like "missionary work" and Prop 8. Until then, check out all of Fatale's videos at fatalemedia.com. ♥

ADS! CLASSIFIEDS

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Bullet Productions needs actors with good improv skills for ongoing plays. Good pay, no rehearsals and lots of fun. Contact Darcy 780-203-1712

Cast needed for short experimental film. No pay, shooting early December. For more info, contact: leon_cdc@hotmail.com

The Works Festival—Calls to Enter • Churchill Square 2009 Artisan Market and Food Street Vendors. Reduced rates if you apply by Feb. 15, 2009. Contact dawn@theworks.ab.ca for more info. **Deadline: Apr. 15, 2009** • Churchill Square 2009 Street Stage. **Deadline: Feb. 15, 2009** • 2011 exhibit **Deadline: Aug. 25, 2009** • 2nd Annual Chalk Art Contest. Prizes are awarded on Canada Day, base your entry on the 2009 Festival theme HEAT! **Deadline: June 1, 2009** • 2nd Annual Smaller than a Breadbox. Base your entry on the 2009 Festival theme HEAT! **Deadline: May 1, 2009** • Download applications at www.theworks.ab.ca

Steeps—Old Glenora: for open mic—Spoken word First Thursday every month. Contact Adam Snider to sign up adam.snider@gmail.com

MUSICIANS

Bass player wanted to relocate to Medicine Hat to play in various new metal/rock project with Hart Bachmier of Disciples of Power. 25-35 yrs. Must have long hair, serious inq only. 403-504-5135

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The Loud Hailers seek keyboardist and saxophonist for original rock n roll, rhythm & blues. 780-760-7284 Justin

Three-piece power trio requires lead guitarist for modern rock project. Please be mature and serious 780-418-2214

2 singer/songwriters have started a Pop/Jazz group. Practice weekly. Looking for musicians (18-24yrs) who are creative and can improvise. Need pianist, guitarist, bassist, drummer, celloist, and brass section. Contact: karenelaven@hotmail.com

Wanted: Singer and bass player for heavy original project. Inq: Tool, Filter, Mudvane. Contact Aaron 780-474-7076 aa77ron@hotmail.com

JUNIOR ACCOUNTANT

Book publisher looking for highly motivated person with an educational background in accounting to serve as a support to the accounting staff for a group of companies. This junior position will provide an excellent hands-on learning opportunity for someone looking to gain work experience as well as grow with the company. Flexible hours may be considered.

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- At intermediate or higher level of a recognized program in accounting
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- Experience with MS Excel preferred

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Are you looking for a great working environment with a well-established company? This south side publishing firm is looking for a mature Office Assistant/Receptionist with a strong commitment to good customer service and the ability to support accounting and sales functions. One year's experience in a similar role and experience with ACCPAC and Excel preferred.

Please e-mail resumes to mtchir@lonepinepublishing.com or fax to (780) 433-9646 referencing the position you are applying for.



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VOLUNTEER

Volunteers needed for the annual Ice on Whyte Festival, Jan 15-25, 2009 in Festival Park, 85 Ave, 104 St. visit www.iceonwhyte.ca, email Shelly Hall Zenew at shelly@iceonwhyte

Volunteer website for youth 14-24 years old. www.youthvolunteer.ca

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The Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Campaign: Nov 20-Dec 24 Volunteers Needed! To help out call 780-472-3000

Break the Code! Help and adult to read and write. Call Jordan Centre for Family Literacy 780-421-7323 www.familit.ca

Red Cross's Humanitarian Issues Program: need volunteers to help promote humanitarian issues to the Edmonton Community. We are hoping to expand our youth team (12-24 yrs old). Contact Laura Keegan at laura.keegan@redcross.ca

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Halfway and hurting

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DEAR ANDREA:
My wife and I are both about 41 and have been married 10 years. Our marriage has been quite satisfying except in one big area (you'll never guess). Intercourse has become quite impossible over the years, owing (I suspect) to the multiple abdominal surgeries that my wife has had during that time. The problem is that I can initially achieve nearly full penetration, but as the action continues and my wife gets more turned on, a strange foreshortening seems to occur in her vaginal canal, so that eventually I am only able to get in about half as far as I had when we started, and it is somewhat painful (for me, not so much for her), as if there is something

actually obstructing me. She has seen a gynecologist, who said everything looked "normal." I am also "normal" (about seven inches in length) and up to this time have not had any problems with ED.

Do you have any idea what might be the problem, and could you suggest anything that may help? We are both quite depressed about our inability to achieve complete intimacy.

LOVE, KICKED OUT

DEAR OUT:

I understand completely, despite my immediate, admittedly pedantic urge to pick at your use of the '50s-style euphemism "intimacy." Your problem is obviously of an intimate nature but you and your wife sound plenty intimate with each other in the sense of sharing one's deepest and most private self. You are intimate. What you aren't is inside, which is quite another and really less complicated thing.

One often sees sex educators waving off problems like micropenis or dyspareunia (painful intercourse) or one partner's STD with an airy, "You can always do something else!" Indeed, you can. But if you want to have intercourse and cannot, I'd expect some amount of frustration, bad feeling, and even depression to follow.

So, what is going on? We know I'm not a doctor and that the person who declared your wife "normal" is a doctor, but that person is also, in all likelihood, wrong. Women have long been accused of imagining menstrual cramps, endometriosis pain, fibromyalgia and even lupus, and none so far has been found to be blamable on our bad personalities. Your wife is not imagining that her vagina is being occluded by something at the crucial moment, and anyway it can hardly be all in her head when you are feeling it, and rather uncomfortably, in your dick. Something is going wrong in there.

I don't know what procedures your wife has undergone, or what conditions caused her to undergo them, but any abdominal procedure, most certainly

including hysterectomy and childbirth vaginal or Caesarean, not to mention pregnancy itself, can cause nerve or muscle damage, scar tissue and unhelpful structural changes. Something, a muscle or suspensory ligament, has been weakened. Something is pushing on something or falling into something—I'd assume uterine prolapse, but again, I'm not a doctor—and needs to be coaxed back into place. No matter which structure has wandered off where, something, needs to be done, whether more surgery (one hopes not), physical therapy (exercises or dilators), or the acquisition of an odd little item called a "pessary," which is worn in the vagina and not be confused with a "peccary," which is a wild pig.

These problems can be tricky and even intractable, so I don't want to promise you that it can be all fixed up in a jiffy, but any progress would be better than where you are now. And I hope you two have good insurance, the kind that allows you to see a specialist when you think you need one, not just when your PCP thinks so, because this is going to require

one. "Nope, looks normal," in this case, is not a diagnosis, it is a dismissal.

This is all putting me much in mind of vulvodynia and vestibulitis, the long-dismissed, "all in your head" pelvic pain conditions which, due to the efforts of the National Vulvodynia Association and some recent breakthroughs in diagnosis and treatment, have received quite a lot of press lately. I'd never given persistent pelvic pain enough thought myself until I started teaching classes in keeping your relationship (the "intimacy" part) and sex life going after you have kids. After the third class in which one woman raised a hand at the end and asked, reasonably, "But what if it still hurts?" I realized we are dealing with something of a silent epidemic here, the "silent" element of which can still induce feminist rages in "mostly too lazy/busy for feminist rages these days" me. We must be honest—if men's balls fell out on a regular basis, or if becoming a father often caused lifelong painful intercourse, you'd better believe we would hear quite a lot about it.

LOVE, ANDREA

VOLUNTEER

The CRC is seeking energetic, caring, committed volunteers to become Prevention Educators for its RespectED: Violence and Abuse Prevention Program. Canadian Red Cross/RespectED Training Program begins fall 2008. www.redcross.ca/cnr, Education Coordinator: 780.702.4158 / E: edmonton.respect@redcross.ca

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A Hospital is seeking healthy and depressed subjects (not currently taking antidepressants) for various studies. Reimbursement for expenses provided. Call: 407-3221 (depressed only), 407-3506 (healthy or depressed), or 407-3775 (female healthy or depressed, including pregnant and just delivered)

Dr.'s Appointment Buddy—Accompany new refugee immigrants to their medical appointments to give support and assist with paperwork. Thu, 10:30am-2:30pm. Transportation not required. Leslie 780-432-1137, ext 357

CANADIAN LIVER FOUNDATION is looking for enthusiastic volunteers for presentations and special events. Call Carmen at 780-444-1547

Instructor Support Aide—Assist Health Care Aide Training instructors in a program for immigrant women to present course materials, and students. 4hrs/wk, 8am-noon, or 1-4pm, Mon-Fri. Northeast location. Leslie 780-432-1137, ext 357

Senior's Birthday Entertainment
Senior recreation/activity centre needs volunteer entertainers for monthly afternoon parties. Weekday message Karen 780-468-1985 seesa.ca

The Support Network: Volunteer today to be a Distress Line Listener. Apply on line at: www.thesupportnetwork.com or call 780-732-6648

Elder Abuse Victim Advocate—Assist, provide telephone support. Mature volunteers, 35+, with calm manner and excellent communication skills wanted. Volunteers receive intensive training and support. Commitment: Two 2 hr shifts/month, plus attendance at monthly staff meeting. Daytime Mon, Tue, or Thu 8am-5pm. Leslie 780-432-1137, ext 357

Volunteer for your local Red Cross. Help us make our mission of assisting the most vulnerable in our community and around the world possible. Volunteer for Red Cross. To volunteer call 780 423 2680 / E: wz-edm-dm@redcross.ca

Rise Up: Radio Free Edmonton on CJSR FM 88 seeking people with a critical ear who will be at protests, picket-lines, blockades, any sites of struggle between people, corporations or governments to simply bring a recorder and send us the footage. E: riseupradio@cjsr.com; Sam Power, 780-492-2577 ext. 4 for recording equipment and more details

Volunteers Needed to work with new immigrants in a variety of tasks and with some great fun events and outings! Many exciting shifts available! Call Judy 780-424-3545, ext 249

Volunteers Needed! to assist new immigrants on first time shopping trip for essentials. 2-3 hrs. occas. weekdays. Call Judy 780-424-3545, ext 249

Volunteers Needed! to help adult immigrants learn English. 3-4hrs/wk. No exp. req., various locations. Judy 780-424-3545, ext 249

Meals on Wheels, volunteer kitchen help and drivers needed, weekdays 10am-1pm. Call 780-429-2020.

Volunteer for ElderCare. Help with daily activities for seniors. Call 780-434-4747 Ext. 4

Canadian Mental Health Association—Edmonton

Want to stop smoking? Nicotine Anonymous meetings: 7pm, every Wed, Ebenezer United Church Hall, 186 Ave, 163 St. Contact Gwyn 780-443-3820

Region Board Recruitment. For info visit www.cmha-edmonton.ab.ca, click on Volunteer. Contact Abigail Parrish-Craig at grammaabby@shaw.ca

ECAWAR (EDMONTON COALITION AGAINST WAR AND RACISM) Volunteers welcome. www.wage-peace.com for info/contacts, 780-988-2713

Become a distress line volunteer. The Support Network, 780-732-6648 www.thesupportnetwork.com

A call for volunteers - Action for Healthy Communities: Questions about AHC philosophy & programs? 780-944-4887 Visit: www.a4hc.ca

Volunteer for the AGA and meet other art enthusiasts, get a free membership after 30 hrs of volunteer work, get invitations to events and movies. For info contact Priscilla Wagar at 780-422-6223 or pwa-gar@artgalleryalberta.com

Would you like to help people/families affected by Alzheimers? Socialize with seniors while assisting with games and activities. ElderCare Edmonton, 780-434-4747 ext 4

Join in the hottest new trend of personal history. Unique volunteer opportunity to develop your artistic and writing skills by helping to put together a collection of life history stories of Edmonton elders. Interviews have been conducted, we now need someone to assist with transcription, storywriting, and/or layout and design. 780-434-4747 ext 4 for info

Help to broadcast news nationally for the blind and print-restricted! Email edmonton@voiceprintcanada.com, or call 780-451-8331

Love Bingo? Volunteer for Elder Care. Bingo volunteers are needed to help raise funds for program meals and outings. Ph: 780-434-4747, ext. 4

Volunteer for a more just society for immigrants and refugees. www.multiculturalcoalition.ca or call Janina 780-423-1973

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SERVICES

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Canadian Mental Health Association, www.cmha-edmonton.ab.ca Education Program is pleased to offer workshops to give you the skills to intervene with people who may be at risk for suicide. **Follow the links to ASSIST or call 414-6300**

VUEWEEKLY CONTEST RULES:

Unless otherwise specified, the following will apply:

- the winner must be 18 or older.
- prize must be accepted as awarded.
- no one may enter any contest more than once.
- you may only win once every 60 days.
- Vue Weekly reserves the right to exclude anyone from our contests.
- no staff, sponsors or members of their immediate families may enter.
- the personal information of those who enter will not be sold but may be provided to contest sponsors.
- the chances of winning depend on the number of entries received.
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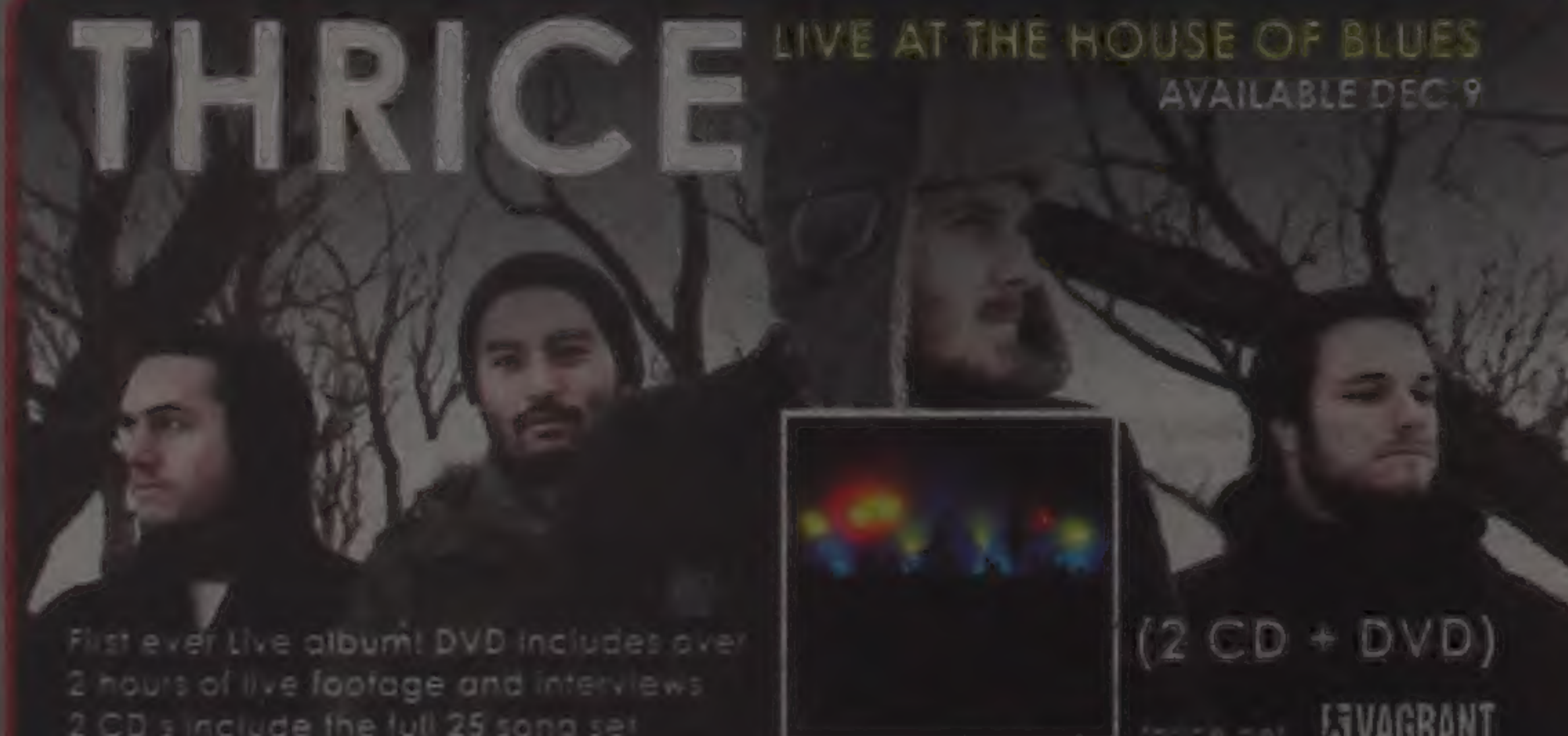
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